THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

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Have the British Won?

A year from today we may be saying that September 22 marked the end of a great crisis of the war, because in the weeks preceding the autumnal equinox the RAF broke up Hitler's attempt to invade Great Britain. What we know now is that British airmen have been striking with great fury at the possible embarkation points, at railroad junctions, oil supplies and refineries, at munitions works, while the German air force has been striving mainly to reduce London to ruins. We know that moments favorable to an expedition have passed, and that now the season of storms and fogs has begun. And we know that the conference in Rome between von Ribbentrop and Mussolini has dealt, according to report, with a winter campaign in the Near East, with Greece and Egypt and Turkey, with Africa and with Spain's entrance into the war.

This may mean that Hitler, balked of his island prey, will next concentrate on more outlying parts of the British Empire. But of all that nobody can be sure. The British will have to keep constant guard against invasion, steeling their nerves against death from the air, and warding off the attacker with heavier and heavier aggressives, until the power of their foe to strike is definitely ended. Hitler could enjoy no greater triumph than to convince the British that they had blocked his threat, and then to strike in force.

Lighted Fuses

The war, meanwhile, moves in on this country by circuitous routes. Dakar is a French port in West Africa, 1,700 miles from Natal, Brazil; bombers could readily traverse the distance. British warships, with a contingent of French troops under General de Gaulle, are laying siege to it in order to prevent it from falling into Nazi hands and being put to totalitarian uses. The Pétain government has already retaliated by bombing Gibraltar. Will Hitler dare rearm Frenchmen for a war against Britain?

And in the Pacific, Japan invades French Indo-China to advance against Chiang Kai-shek on another front. The French colonials are resisting. How long will they do so without assurance of help? While they struggled, conferences were held in Washington between the Department of State and the British Ambassador, which were reported to concern Anglo-American defense coöperation in the Pacific—possibly joint use of naval bases such as Singapore. Mr. Hull pointedly said he doesn't like Japan's aggression southward. But it is predicted he will not send a new note. What will he do? British resistance to Japan at this point plainly depends on the action this country is ready to take.

Children Die, Too

It was a sad world, almost proof against shock, which learned that an unnamed British steamer bearing refugees, most of them children, had been torpedoed in the Atlantic, and that many of the victims had perished of exposure in the stormy sea. Germany issues her customary denial of guilt, saying the story was an invention of the British to get this country into the war. Nobody believes the denial. But Hitler need

CONTENTS

The Week 431

Editorials

The Challenge to Fight 434
Willkie and the Record 435

General Articles

What's Wrong with Our Navy? . . . . . Donald W. Mitchell 437
When the Republicans Win: IV . A. I. Harris 439
Mexico's Second Six-Year Plan . . . . . David W. Nussbaum 441
Everything Will Be All Right . . . . . Edward Newhouse 443
How They are Voting: II 444
Washington Notes . . . . . T. R. B. 446
Other People's Money . . . John T. Flynn 447
Every Man Is Inner Dark (verse) . . . . . Tom Boggs 447
For Better, for Worse . . . Otis Ferguson 448
A Communication . Russell W. Davenport 449
The Bandwagon 449

Correspondence 450

Books in Review

Mr. Brooks's Second Phase . Edmund Wilson 452
You Can Go Home Again . Howard Wolf 454
The Left Side of the Tracks . Henry David 455
The Seal in the Bedroom . . Otis Ferguson 456
A Reader's List 457

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have no fear that we shall enter the war because of anger about one boat-load of children. This is the sort of thing we have learned by experience to expect from him, and it is that expectation of ruthlessness without limit that makes us ponder. We have endured too many injuries to humane emotions to be driven to act by one more incident.

Hiram's Disciple

After Senator Hiram Johnson had carried the Republican, Democratic and Progressive primaries in California, Wendell Willkie told the Californians that Mr. Johnson had been his boyhood idol. Strange we never heard of it before.

Mr. Willkie Fades

On the eve of Mr. Willkie's national speech-making tour the Gallup poll found him far behind the position of Governor Landon at the same period of the campaign in 1936. The poll on September 20 gave President Roosevelt 55 percent of the popular vote and 453 electoral votes, or 38 states, to Mr. Willkie's 78 votes and 10 states. If the 1936 history were repeated, he might actually wind up behind Mr. Landon. His supporters professed themselves not at all dismayed, however, by the bad progress their candidate seemed to be making. They insisted that the speeches on his national tour would turn the tide in his favor. We doubt that Mr. Willkie's tour has improved his chances in any marked degree.

For the fact is that the more Mr. Willkie talks the more one sees that his statements consist either of endorsements of New Deal policies or of meaningless platitudes by which he could not be bound in the White House. He favors maximum help to Great Britain; so does Mr. Roosevelt. He wants this country to have impregnable defense; who doesn't, except a few Bundists and Communists? He wants economic aid given to China, which is a good idea if you remember also that what she chiefly needs is military aid. The Roosevelt administration has made large loans to China, which were used to buy military and semi-military goods. Mr. Willkie wants loans to other countries and favorable trade relations, to improve their position and raise their standard of living. This is a Roosevelt policy, made even broader, since Mr. Willkie talks as if he thought we could use our influence to better the condition of men throughout the entire world.

At another time, Mr. Willkie emphasized his "three-point program." American industry must be rehabilitated, national defense must be strong, democracy and national unity must be preserved. How can one discuss intelligently platitudes like these?

Like Any Republican

Otherwise, Mr. Willkie has taken the obvious line for a Republican candidate. He makes much of the fact that Mr. Roosevelt scuttled the economic conference of 1933. Scuttling that conference was probably unwise, although nobody could be sure of that fact seven years ago—just as no one can be sure that if we hadn't scuttled it things would have turned out any better than they did. Mr. Willkie, it develops, is now opposed to the President's Supreme Court reorganization proposal of three years ago. Opposition noted and placed on file. He professes to be terrorized by the idea of the third term. If everything else were equal,we should agree that the idea of a third term tends in an undesirable direction; but there are other matters in this election so important that compared with them, this issue is negligible.

The Republican candidate insists loudly that "there is no indispensable man." Of course there isn't; no sensible person ever said that there was. But our choice is not between the dispensable Mr. Roosevelt and some hypothetical embodiment of perfection; it is between Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Willkie. Let's stick to the subject.

And Denies Appeasement

Mr. Willkie professes indignation because Mr. Henry Wallace "sought to identify the Republican Party with the word 'appeasement'." Mr. Willkie, of course, is trying to offset the effect of his own unforgivable blunder in saying that Mr. Roosevelt before Munich "telephoned to Hitler and Mussolini and urged them to sell Czecho-Slovakia down the river." When even his own entourage pointed out to him that this is a ridiculously false charge, he changed his form of words, but not the fundamental idea. In the same breath he tries to accuse Mr. Roosevelt of appeasement and of being indiscreetly rough to the dictators.

Mr. Wallace, be it noted, did not say that Mr. Willkie was an appeaser or that the Republican Party holds that policy—though, as we pointed out in our issue of September 16, some of its politicians have followed a course parallel to that of British and French appeasers. What Mr. Wallace said was that powerful forces *allied with* the Republican Party would be prepared to appease Hitler if he won the Battle of Britain. No well informed person can deny that this is true. The forces to which Mr. Wallace referred were those of big business, and there are a hundred of them supporting the Republican Party for every one who supports the Democrats. They are for appeasement through a shortsighted view of their own economic interests. So were the same kind of men in France. So were the same kind of men in England—and some of them still are. Mr. Willkie was not candid or complete in what he said about Mr. Wallace. He would do better to repudiate the Republican appeasers, as he has repudiated Coughlin and the Bund, than to pretend they do not exist. Coughlin and the Bund still support him, and the appeasers will do the same.

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Yes or No, Mr. Ford

Last week, the magazine Friday published, among other sensational material on American fascists, what it alleged to be a photostat of a letter from W. J. Cameron, the voice of Henry Ford, to Fritz Kuhn, until recently the head of the German-American Bund. The letter was affectionately addressed to "Dear Fritz," and explained that the Ford Motor Company would be very careful to conceal the fact that Kuhn was employed in its chemical department. On the same day, the New York newspaper PM published a three-page spread on Ford's alleged fascist links. PM asserted that Henry Ford's anti-Semitic books and articles are still being circulated in eight languages; that his right-hand man, Cameron, is an officer in the Anglo-Saxon Federation, a fascist group, and is actively connected with its anti-Semitic publication, Destiny; that cars in the Ford parking lot are plastered with anti-Semitic stickers with the connivance of the Ford Service Department; and that Edsel Ford was a director of a corporation "dominated by Nazi Germany."

Ford's record has never been very good. He has a long history of anti-Semitic and vicious anti-labor activities, he has made statements favorable to Hitler and been awarded a medal by him, and he has flatly refused to produce engines for British defense. These new charges by Friday and PM require immediate investigation.

Socialist Independents

The Independent Committee for Thomas and Krueger issues a statement of its faith, salient passages of which follow:

"We believe that the United States can challenge the worldwide drift toward fascism by defeating the social reaction and nationalist intolerance which are already threatening political democracy at home; by democratic planning for human needs rather than totalitarian planning for human destruction; that a workable democracy which offers *both* security and freedom will serve as an inspiration to the oppressed people of the whole world.

"Norman Thomas and Maynard Krueger are the only candidates who may be counted upon for unwavering opposition to the forces of reaction, alien-baiting and militarist hysteria and the drive toward war. More important, they are the only candidates who offer—in place of a false "war prosperity"—an alternative program of democratic planning which can really meet the challenge of a totalitarian Europe. We agree with Norman Thomas that 'Successful defense may well be the by-product of harnessing our machinery under democratic control for the conquest of poverty.'

"There is no material difference in the foreign policies of the two major candidates and almost no difference in their fundamental domestic policies. This period of world crisis is no time for compromise with what may seem a slightly 'lesser evil.' It is a year in which men and women of integrity must be willing to bear witness for the principles in which they believe.

"Norman Thomas and Maynard Krueger will not be elected in November, but a million men and women united behind them in this campaign and on election day will serve as a brake to undemocratic tendencies in this country and effectively influence the policies of the successful candidate."

Among the signers are numerous distinguished persons associated with the Socialist movement in the past, such as Sarah Cleghorn, B. W. Huebsch, John Paul Jones, John Haynes Holmes, Vida D. Scudder. Others are newer recruits—but chiefly from other parties of the Left. It is surprising that a league with this name should contain so few really independent voters of note, such as John Dewey and Henry Pratt Fairchild. Perhaps the reason is that, like The New Republic, independents who might otherwise approve the statement see more vividly the danger in the Republican alternative at home and in a Hitler victory abroad.

The Presses Are Rolling

Drew Pearson and Robert S. Allen in their syndicated column "The Washington Merry-Go-Round" report that The New Republic's "special edition on Wendell Willkie can't be bought in Chicago and some other cities. Willkie boosters are reported to have bought them up." We know from our mail that purchasers are unable to find them on newsstands in many places. We can't confirm the Pearson-Allen rumor, however. We are doing our level best at this end to keep the supplement on sale and regret that our readers are having any trouble. If your dealer is out of copies, ask him to reorder.

News Notes of a Week

Abortive Almazán rebellions in a number of places throughout Mexico appeared to have been generally crushed by the Cárdenas government. . . . Work was hurried on underground air-raid shelters in London. Meanwhile, sleeping provisions were made in the subway stations for the homeless. . . . Germany engaged in a large paper offensive, warning Greece and Egypt to leave the British ship before it sank, threatening that Spain would enter the war, and making dark hints that Switzerland had better behave.

Merwin K. Hart, minor-league American fascist, told the Union League Club that the Communist International was responsible for the current overuse of the word "democracy." . . . It was revealed that 205,343 out of 375,513 names on the California petitions for the recall of Governor Olson were phony, and the movement collapsed. . . . Willkie came out against changing the date of Thanksgiving Day.

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The Challenge to Fight

NEW REPUBLIC READERS will remember an eloquent communication from its London correspondent, Mr. H. N. Brailsford (June 17), urging this country to avoid Britain's errors and to enter the war before it is too late. On the invitation of an American publisher, Mr. Brailsford has now expanded this thesis into a little book, "From England to America."[1] When we published the communication, we wrote that the author had a right to address our readers "as a candid friend, who is exempt from the charge of being a war propagandist. He is, first, a citizen of the world, even though he is a patriotic Englishman." In the present work, he now adds, he has not "consulted a single official person in England." This is a personal message from a humane and qualified expert in international affairs, and deserves to be read as such.

There is no more important question for the American people to consider during the next few months, and we trust consequently that this book will have a wide circulation and earnest reading. Much is here that was not contained in the letter. Many Americans have closed their minds against entering a new world war for any purpose except immediate military defense against invasion; they ought nevertheless to examine what may be said on the other side, for the issue is real and momentous, and cannot without levity be prejudged. The entire future of this people, as well as that of the world, may hang on the decision.

With most of Mr. Brailsford's argument the editors of this journal strongly agree. England may beat off actual invasion and conquest, but even if she does, and Nazi dominance survives in Europe, she will no longer be able to survive as a home of freedom and liberal institutions. The airplane has made continental unity inevitable, on some terms or other. A capital in constant fear of murderous bombing must be servile. The old order of national separatism and its accompanying economic and social civilization was doomed even before the war. Hitler has merely given it the death blow. We are in the midst of a revolution, and it will be either in the Hitler pattern or in some other that his enemies may be able to create. Therefore, unless the totalitarian states are to be allowed to control the world outside this continent, it is not sufficient that Britain resists conquest; Hitler must be beaten at home.

Mr. Brailsford admits that much of the present disaster can be attributed to the errors and blindness of the British and French. He was, in fact, one of those who pointed out some of those mistakes when they were made. But the United States is not guiltless either. And he sees us now making, in his opinion, many of the same mistakes that he regrets so bitterly in his own country.

One of these is to regard the war as far away and not likely to touch us if we keep out of it. The Atlantic, he admits, is wider than the Channel, and we are in no immediate danger of invasion. But we are in danger of having to live continually under a war economy, in a world where all the things we hold most dear must be warped by the peril from Hitlerism. We, no less than Britain, would be prisoners in a Nazi world. He points out the influence of the Germans, Italians and Spaniards in Latin America, and the difficulty that we should experience in giving South Americans the same trade advantages that a totalitarian Europe could offer. A two-ocean navy takes time to build, and a world in arms has the resources to outbuild it.

We were late, like the British, in understanding the importance of air power, late in seeing the necessity of military training for a modern army. We have now begun to rearm, but so did England, after Munich, and after such indispensable allies as Czecho-Slovakia and Spain had been lost. "Strategically may not England be your Spain—only more so?"

Most of all we have misjudged Hitler, as Englishmen did. They thought that after a certain point he would be satisfied. They thought also that he could be quieted with economic concessions. They hoped too to turn him toward the East. But the Nazi psychology is the logic of power, which knows no stopping place and cares nothing for economic gain except for the uses of power. How many in this country now tell you that Hitler will not be interested in the Americas, once he defeats Britain, or that we can promote peace by trade with him? How many tell you that we need not fear because he will fall out with Stalin or Mussolini or Japan?

So far the argument is well reasoned, eloquent and convincing. Here Mr. Brailsford encounters the reply, made by The New Republic to his letter, that we are unprepared to give Britain the help she needs most now except by way of manufactures and supplies, and that these things she is getting anyway. After a declaration of war it would be a year at least before we could send enough soldiers to count. The British navy is still supreme. We have contributed destroyers as well. And to equip our own army with the utmost speed might actually interfere, as it has in the past, with the flow of armament abroad.

He admits the force of these objections. But, he says, our productive capacity is so great that if we declared war we should be able to mobilize our industry more thoroughly and quickly, so as to supply both ourselves and the British. We shall not do so, he thinks, if we are not at war. Furthermore, he admonishes us that we are much too modest about our strength and our influence in the world. Though we are a great power,

[1] From England to America, A Message, by Henry Noel Brailsford. New York: Whittlesey House. 130 pages. $1.

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we decline to act as one. A declaration of war from us would lift the spirits of men all over the world, infuse new hope into Hitler's enemies, and enable them to hang on at all costs until we came to the rescue. The issue would no longer be in doubt, for the United States is invincible.

Mr. Brailsford does not shrink from the ultimate issues. What kind of world should we be fighting to create? He says it must be a unified, democratic Europe, not a new imperialism, and that Britain is now thinking of no other outcome. Only by a crusade of this kind could an expeditionary force invading the Continent call up the support among temporarily subdued peoples which would be essential for a chance of victory. The United States is in a position, furthermore, to dictate any terms it pleases. Britain certainly could not oppose us, and what other potential enemy of Hitler would?

Mr. Brailsford, above all men, knows the hate of the sensitive for war and slaughter; he has been a lifelong pacifist. But he has been forced to the conclusion that the world is not ready for the more humane international virtues as long as fascism thrives in it; he has seen his own countrymen try to save their lives only to lose them. He is aware of the promise of both presidential candidates not to send American soldiers abroad, and this saddens him concerning the future, for if the war is to be won, great armies will be needed. But he suggests that such an army might be raised from volunteers who understand the issues. After all, thousands of Americans went to Spain, when we were not at war and contrary to this government's wishes.

We still believe that it would be of little material aid to Britain in the immediate future if this country should declare war. Even with the utmost possible speed, it takes time to build up a war industry. We might go at it more wholeheartedly and expeditiously than we are going, to be sure, but those who agree with The New Republic on the major issues should do their utmost to see that this is achieved without a war declaration, so that we may both supply Britain and prepare to defend ourselves.

The question whether we ought to give active military aid in order to defeat Hitler on the Continent can arise only after Britain has stood off the invader and we are ready. That time will, at the soonest, arrive some months hence. We shall have to consider with the utmost care the possible peace aims and whether this nation ought to commit itself to war in their behalf. Fortunately, we may be able to make a choice instead of being led in by the pressure of events as we were in 1917. But we must be mentally prepared for this new phase and the need for decision which it will bring. If our answer is no, we shall have to understand why as well as Mr. Brailsford understands the reasons for answering yes.

Willkie and the Record

ON PAGE 449 of this issue of The New Republic a letter from Mr. Russell W. Davenport, Mr. Willkie's personal representative, attempts to discredit our entire supplement, "This Man Willkie," on the basis of a few instances of what he terms "fiction." It is pertinent first of all to consider these instances:

1. "There is the statement on page 327 that Commonwealth and Southern's subsidiaries have in force only two labor contracts with the AFL. The most elementary care in investigation would have revealed the fact that these companies have no less than twenty-one existing contracts with the AFL and one with the CIO."

What we said was, "The AFL reports two contracts with Commonwealth subsidiaries." This was in accordance with the latest official AFL statement. Mr. Davenport apparently obtained his information from a list issued by the Associated Willkie Clubs of America. All but four of the contracts there listed are with street-railway or bus employees; transportation properties have been segregated from the ten recognized Commonwealth and Southern subsidiaries and put under a separate corporation, the Transportation Securities Company. These contracts represented collective-bargaining relationships established years ago, prior to the formation of Commonwealth and Southern and Mr. Willkie's connection with it.

There are four companies with contracts covering power utilities proper. Of these, South Carolina dates from 1912 and Georgia Power from 1919—seventeen and ten years respectively before Commonwealth and Southern was formed. That may be the reason for the AFL understatement. Of the other two contracts, Gulf Power (1939) is the smallest of all the subsidiaries, and Central Illinois Light (1940) was signed a month before the Republican convention. The list, significantly, does not include the three important subsidiaries cited by The New Republic as guilty of specific unfair labor practices—Alabama Power, Consumers Power and Ohio Edison.

Mr. Davenport makes no mention whatever of the overwhelming evidence of unfair labor practices cited in great detail by The New Republic: (a) that the National Labor Relations Board found three Willkie subsidiaries guilty of interfering with the self-organization of employees by the promotion of company unions; (b) that these company unions had been fostered to fight both the AFL and the CIO, (c) that the Board found Consumers Power guilty of flagrant intimidation and coercion of active union members, (d) that Consumers Power violated its agreements with the CIO. The first agreement with that company, made in 1937 following a strike, was signed by Mr.

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Willkie himself, but the management almost immediately proceeded to violate it by promoting its company union, spying on CIO meetings, and discriminating against CIO members.

On the basis of the record it may be fair to say that where Mr. Willkie found labor contracts existing he left them undisturbed, but where labor sought recognition his companies successfully resisted collective bargaining except in three cases—the least important subsidiary (Gulf Power), a subsidiary where the issue became acute one month before the nominating convention (Central Illinois Light), and the subsidiary where, as we have stated, he reportedly attempted to make an alliance with labor to fight the TVA (Georgia Power).

2. "The writer suggests . . . that Mr. Willkie is responsible for such criticisms as may be made of the organization of Commonwealth and Southern and its common-stock exchange offers." But, according to Mr. Davenport, this suggestion, and the entire thesis of our section, "Mr. Willkie in Business," falls to the ground because Commonwealth and Southern was incorporated May 1, 1929, and offered its exchanges of stock on June 12, whereas Mr. Willkie did not become counsel for the corporation until October 1, 1929.

What the article set out to prove was, not that Mr. Willkie was personally responsible for these matters, but that he was not entirely candid when he said, according to James C. Hagerty in The New York Times of July 16, 1940, "I am very proud that I had nothing to do with that phase of American economic life. . . . I found myself in complete accord with Speaker Bankhead in his condemnation of speculative orgies of the 1920's." What the article charged was, "So, in the spring and summer of 1929, Mr. Willkie, giving the lie to the noble defiance of evil speculation expressed by Candidate Willkie in 1940, saw nothing wrong with what the bankers were doing with Commonwealth and Southern. When the chance came to become an insider himself, he acted as though Commonwealth and Southern were the best fraternity in the campus." Note that these sentences say explicitly that the bankers did the job, that Mr. Willkie saw nothing wrong with it, and that soon afterwards he joined the organization.

Of course Mr. Davenport might argue that Mr. Willkie, with childish innocence, did not know what the bankers had been doing—although many prominent men were attacking holding-company abuses and predicting calamity. But the periodical of which Mr. Davenport was managing editor before the campaign—Fortune—wrote about Wendell Willkie in May, 1937, "He learned so much about the business that when Commonwealth and Southern was formed he was invited to join John C. Weadock as the corporation's counsel in New York." It may be added that the Akron company which Mr. Willkie represented before his move to New York was merged with a Youngstown company to make Allied Power and Light. This company was originally valued at $3,600,000 and was written up to $18,000,000 in the big merger, as a subsidiary of Commonwealth and Southern. Did Mr. Willkie also not know that this was going on?

3. Mr. Davenport repeats Mr. Willkie's sweeping denial that any Commonwealth and Southern company ever employed labor spies, but includes no evidence in support of the denial. He offers again the explanation that the detectives were hired only to check up on street-car fares. Since no new defense is here presented, we can only refer our readers to the full reply to this denial in our issue of September 16, "Mr. Willkie Pleads Guilty." We might add that several of the C. and S. companies shown by the La Follette Committee to have hired labor detectives have no transit lines.

4. Without evidence or argument, Mr. Davenport denies several other statements. On these we must rest until we are presented with some good reason to revise them. We trust that Mr. Willkie, as promised in the last sentence of the letter, will write a full answer to the supplement. When he does so we shall be delighted to publish it, and to acknowledge any errors we may have made. The New Republic has no pretense to infallibility. But if the replies so far received are a sample, we do not believe any material corrections will have to be made.

So far, the replies have either answered charges we did not make, or offered corrections in immaterial details. The point of the labor section, for instance, was not the number of union contracts under Commonwealth and Southern—the statement concerning them was made incidentally near the end of the article. The chief point, of which no refutation has been attempted, was that in important instances subsidiaries fought unions and defied the Labor Relations Act.

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A Journal of Opinion

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What's Wrong with Our Navy?

THE AMERICAN NAVY today occupies the most contradictory position in its history. On one hand the observer may note the strongest battle fleet in the world, a well trained personnel measuring high in ability and morale, and naval aviation that stands supreme. Less obvious, but of vital importance, are such weaknesses as poorly placed naval bases (greatly improved by the new British agreement), unsatisfactory methods of promotion of officers, an antiquated shore organization and the world's slowest and most expensive shipbuilding.

Competent civilian criticism of the navy is largely barred by lack of knowledge, a condition which the navy itself, with its ostrichlike attitude toward its own defects and its frequent censorings of news, has done nothing to diminish, and also by general unfamiliarity with the background of naval affairs. Criticism from within the navy occurs very seldom and then is usually squelched promptly. Only at rare intervals is a naval officer fortunate enough to promote changes and yet escape official displeasure. Officers who have dared to reveal bad conditions have generally fared like Admiral Magruder, who a few years ago was quietly demoted after he had displeased higher officers by revealing waste and inefficiency in the navy yards.

From the standpoint of its ability to fight a long war, one of the greatest defects any navy could possess is poor shipbuilding, and this evil the United States navy has in full measure. American ships of all classes take longer to build than their foreign contemporaries. Great Britain, the United States and Germany all started to build 35,000-ton battleships about the same time. Yet the first German and British vessels are already finished, while the American ships are not scheduled for completion until well into 1942.

There are several reasons for this poor construction record. The worst delays occur between the time ships are authorized and the awarding of contracts for their building, mostly because the Navy Department cannot award contracts until plans are drawn up. In May, 1938, Congress authorized the building of two 45,000-ton battleships, Iowa and New Jersey. Contracts were not given for these vessels until December, 1939—more than a year and a half later—and even now the ships exist only in the blueprint stage. Had such ships been authorized elsewhere, they would have been nearly half-completed by this time. Nor is this an unusual example of delay. The cruisers Columbia and Cleveland, authorized at the same time, have not yet been laid down.

A further cause of delay and excessive costs is private shipbuilding. The navy is required by law to award half of its vessels to private yards. Bidding for these ships is supposed to be on a competitive basis. Actually, so little competition is involved that on occasion one of the bidders has prophesied the amount of each successful bid and the identity of the bidder in advance. The few private companies involved have apparently been able to agree to an advance division of ships with each company entering a "business bid" on the vessels it really wants, and other companies entering extremely high "protective bids." At least such was the interpretation of Senator Trammel of the Naval Affairs Committee of the Senate, when he urged the rejection of all 1933 bids as showing collusion. These evils of private shipbuilding become aggravated at a time like the present when the navy has abundant money and greatly needs ships.

What is true of shipbuilding is true to some degree of other naval contracts, such as cloth for uniforms, copper, electric batteries, armor and thousands of other articles. Occasionally, but only occasionally, a very honest or courageous Secretary of the Navy rejects all bids and readvertises, but such efforts, even if successful in saving the government money, invariably mean loss of time.

Additional hindrances occur after contracts are awarded but before the building is well under way. Despite the long period allowed for preparing blueprints for new ships, mistakes and jokers are often discovered among the plans, and alterations are frequent. Progress is again halted while squabbles arise over necessary adjustments. In 1938, it was reported that the completion of no less than three flotilla leaders and thirty-one destroyers was delayed by changes in design while construction was in progress and also by the inability of new ships to meet trials.

American shipbuilding is not only the slowest in the world but it is by far the most expensive. According to the Navy Department's own figures, the latest American destroyers are costing more than $7,600,000 each, as contrasted to earlier New Deal costs of $4,000,000, British costs for similar vessels of $2,000,000 and inflated World War costs for slightly smaller ships of $1,500,000 each. Nor is this the worst. Estimates of cost of the destroyers of the 1941 program are $10,500,000 each, a price for ships of less than 2,000 tons almost comparable to the $13,000,000 which the super-dreadnought Pennsylvania of 31,400 tons cost before the World War. As late as 1932, the low private-yard bid for a heavy cruiser was slightly more than $8,000,000; estimates of the cost of the cruisers of the 1941 program are $29,000,000 each. Such figures could be cited at length.

Blunders in recent American shipbuilding have been legion. Despite the fact that probably many are con-

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cealed by high naval officers who have never relished civilian comments on their mistakes, enough are known to afford an impressive list. The 10,000-ton, 8-inch-gun cruisers of a few years ago were heavy rollers and were notable for defective sternposts which had to be replaced. Their extremely light armor has given them the name of "paperclads." The two latest airplane carriers, Yorktown and Enterprise, revealed racking vibrations, requiring major replacement jobs. Early American destroyers of the Mahan class have suffered from an arrangement of facilities almost inconceivable in its inconvenience. Twenty out of twenty-eight more recent destroyers have been topheavy, due to preventable defects which everyone but the naval officers concerned sought to avoid. American submarines for many years have had poor engines, causing a number of them to be decommissioned almost as soon as they were completed. Even the Diesel engines on the latest submarines have given trouble. These boats carry the lightest gun armament of any ships of their size and class in the world. It is hardly necessary to add that the correction of these mistakes, where correction is possible, adds materially both to the cost of construction and delay in delivery.

Such defects would be bad enough if any one person were to blame. Because they are not the fault of anyone in particular but are inevitable under existing naval organization, they are infinitely more serious. For the last hundred years the navy has been operating under an archaic system of bureaus into which its work is divided. The present bureaus are Ordnance, Aeronautics, Navigation, Construction and Repair, Engineering, Supplies and Accounts, Medicine and Surgery and Yards and Docks. Two of these—Engineering and Construction and Repair—have recently been consolidated into a new Bureau of Ships. The Chief of Naval Operations is the highest ranking officer of the navy and is supposed to coördinate the work of the bureaus. Unfortunately, he has no legal authority to give orders to the bureau chiefs and is dependent upon their voluntary coöperation for the success of this office. The bureaus are thus very powerful. Although their work overlaps, each is almost completely independent of the others. Their chiefs usually serve as advisers to the Secretary of the Navy, who rarely knows much of naval affairs. On occasion they have fought the Secretary himself at the rare times when he has failed to take their advice. They often draw up plans for operations. If these miscarry they are usually reported back to the bureau originating them, which never fails to absolve itself of all blame and usually makes no change in future plans to correct the mistakes. Thus the bureau has the dual role of judge and defendant.

In the construction of warships, the greatest defect of the bureau system lies in the fact that it divides the work of planning ships among the Bureaus of Construction and Repair, Engineering, Ordnance and, if airplanes are carried, Aeronautics. Only one of these first three bureaus, Ordnance, has done consistently good work; with a few exceptions American ships have been among the most heavily armed and armored in the world. The Bureaus of Construction and Repair and Engineering have done some exceedingly poor work. According to Washington correspondents, they neglected the advice of both private shipyards and the civilian experts in their own department in designing the topheavy destroyers which recently had to be altered. When imperfections were discovered in the destroyers, each bureau blamed the other.

Not all the evils of the navy are traceable to bad shipbuilding resulting from defective organization ashore. The greatest handicap to good naval officers arises from the common practice of constantly transferring them from one type of service to another, without regard to their fitness or previous experience. It can hardly be expected that a naval officer new to his station will always know his duties. A number of disasters have been blamed on this system of frequent and indiscriminate transfer. It is only due to the extremely broad and thorough Annapolis education plus the high caliber of the men involved that the results of this system, as regards efficiency, are not similar to those that would ensue if a large corporation, say the Ford Motor Company, made a business of transferring men from its Brazilian rubber plantation to the assembly line, thence to a sales agency, later to an inspector's job and finally to positions as entertainers on the Ford Sunday Evening Hour.

The navy's haphazard promotion system has neither eliminated incompetents nor assured rapid selection of the best personnel. A few years ago, at the time of the S-4 submarine disaster, the admiral in charge of submarine operations of the Atlantic Coast appeared before a congressional investigating committee and was cross-examined as follows:

Q. Why did it take so long for air to be started into the compartment?

A. I just can't be positive about such things. I just can't remember. Ask the technical people.

Q. Why was not the salvage line constructed to send breathing air into the torpedo chamber connected?

A. Well I don't really know. I can't answer that question. My impression is the divers did all they could do. As to details, I can't tell you. You'll have to ask the technical men.

Q. When was the compartment air line connected?

A. I don't know that it was connected. I'm not sure.

Q. Is the Falcon well equipped for rescue work?

A. There is none better anywhere but I don't know. I can't be positive about such things.

The report of the congressional committee severely censured the admiral for ignorance and incompetence. Apparently this fact did not weigh heavily in the minds of the Navy Department, for later the same

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man was promoted to the command of the battle fleet, one of the most responsible posts in the navy.

Such conditions of maladministration and waste are not new. They have existed for decades and are neither typically Republican nor typically Democratic. The abler Secretaries of the Navy, among them Mr. Charles Edison, have tried to find remedies. A number of improvements have been made, but the principal difficulties remain untouched. Recent Congresses have on the whole been quite willing to appropriate billions for naval uses, but have usually been lacking in constructive curiosity as to how the money would be spent. They have found it easier to follow a plan of outright expansion, however expensive, than to strengthen the national defense through the abolition of inefficiency and waste.

DONALD W. MITCHELL

When the Republicans Win

IV. *The Tories Take Minnesota*

AFTER EIGHT YEARS of limited Farmer-Labor rule —limited because at no time did the Farmer-Labor Party have control of the state legislature—the voters of Minnesota a year ago last November turned their state government back to the Republican Party.

The Republicans did not campaign for a return to the "good old days." They did not attempt a defense of their former record. They did not even insist that Republican rule in Minnesota had been good rule. What they did insist was that they were a party reborn, now dedicated to the ideal of liberal government.

Apostle of the "new Republican liberalism" was Harold E. Stassen, youthful keynoter of the Republican National Convention, at that time an inconspicuous prosecuting attorney of Dakota County, in which is situated the South St. Paul stockyards. Stassen was the "find" of a St. Paul political writer, who did an amazing job in building him up.

Stassen was the Republican candidate for Governor, and under his leadership his party won a most impressive victory. They not only took the governorship but all other state offices by thumping majorities; they made their hold on both houses of the legislature more commanding than it ever had been, and they defeated four of the five incumbent Farmer-Labor congressmen.

Undoubtedly, the Trojan-horse campaign methods of the Republicans contributed to no small extent to the tremendous vote that they received, although a combination of other factors played a vital role. Chief of these were a bitter factional fight within the Farmer-Labor Party that resulted in the public washing of much dirty linen, and a national sweep to the right that also struck Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and several other states.

Stassen and his fellow Republicans promised that if the voters returned the GOP to power, they would see to it that virtually all of the reforms for which the Farmer-Labor Party had campaigned for years were enacted into law. They also said that they would enforce to the letter advanced social legislation placed on the statute books by the liberals of the state.

What were some of the things they promised? They were: "more" social security; "improvement" and "extension" of old-age assistance; "increased" pensions for the blind and for dependent children; "better" relief standards; tax revision based on ability to pay; a "square deal" for the worker; assistance to young men and women "to secure the education and training they desire in their chosen field through a forward-looking youth program"; a civil-service law "that will protect every state employee who has not engaged in politics"; teachers' tenure; "increased" state aid to schools; "improvement" in the buying power of the farmer; new industries; more jobs in private industry; "correction of the abuses and inequalities that have crept into the economic system"; and, withal, less government spending.

How did performance square with promises? Let us review the legislative record.

"Our solemn obligations and our heartfelt willingness to meet the needs of those in distress" was translated in Republican terms to mean reduced relief appropriations. These reduced appropriations have placed heavy burdens on the local governments, some of which are now faced with bankruptcy.

The state's contribution for direct relief to St. Paul and Ramsey County, for example, fell from $1,477,742 in 1937 and $870,416 in 1938 to $707,575 in 1939, when relief expenditures were the largest in the history of that community. In 1940 this contribution dropped to $434,514. The city and county now find it necessary to sell bonds to take care of the relief load. As of October 1, 1939, food and milk allowances for direct relief in St. Paul were reduced 20 percent.

In Minneapolis and Hennepin County reductions in relief standards were effected at about the same time. But here the community faces a more serious situation, since Minneapolis is now at about the legal limit of its bonded indebtedness. From now on, everything is in the laps of the gods.

The real viciousness of the state relief bill is seen in its provisions withholding aid from any community that grants relief in excess of the standards set up by

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the State Relief Agency, requiring a two years' residence in the township, municipality or county before a person is eligible for relief and providing for the filing of a new application by a relief client every three months. Also, a provision which had been included in all relief bills passed under previous Farmer-Labor administrations, that no relief officer could refuse to grant relief to a client because he or she refused to accept a position as a strikebreaker, was excluded from the bill, which has been condemned by the Minnesota State Conference on Social Work.

No effort whatever was made to improve or extend old-age assistance. On the contrary, an old-age-assistance homestead lien law was passed, compelling old people owning homesteads to give the state a lien on their property as a condition to receiving aid. This, of course, was for the purpose of cutting down the number of recipients. The decrease amounted to eighteen per thousand estimated population of inhabitants sixty-five years of age and over as compared to a national *increase* of thirteen per thousand.

A state labor-relations law was enacted which, while nowhere near so bad, from the standpoint of labor, as the Oregon law, certainly is not a good law. It is a far cry from the state labor-relations act sponsored by the Farmer-Labor administration of Elmer Benson, which was patterned after the National Labor Relations Act and was defeated by the Republican majority in the state legislature. The present law makes it mandatory to serve a ten days' notice before either a strike or a lockout can be called, so that it is difficult for labor to conduct a successful strike.

The Minneapolis Central Labor Union recently adopted a resolution declaring that the act "in many instances abolished for all intents and purposes the right to picket peacefully, and in other cases limited it to such an extent as to make it practically useless." The law rescinded the act prohibiting issuance of injunctions during labor disputes, passed during the Farmer-Labor administration of the late Floyd B. Olson. Labor is now demanding either drastic modification of the act or its outright repeal. That it has prevented some strikes is undoubtedly true.

Under camouflage of putting in civil service, a veritable spoilsman's paradise was created. Before passage of the law, state employees were fired indiscriminately, not by scores but by hundreds, to create jobs for political workers. The law itself places state employees on a probationary period, which enables the administration to get rid of anybody it pleases without right of appeal, and deprives the employees of the right of collective bargaining, through their unions, with the Civil Service Commission. State employee unions were virtually wiped out. Reduction of salaries of state employees was effected through reclassification of positions, while a lot of new, fat-salaried jobs were created.

The Minnesota farmer wanted a tax on oleomargarine and other butter substitutes in order to protect the state's big dairy interests. But what he got was a slogan ordered carried on all state printed matter reading, "Drink More Milk—Eat More Butter—For Your Health." Taxes on Rural Electrification Administration lines were reduced drastically, but before we can place this on the credit side of the liberal ledger we must call attention to passage of a companion act, not given much publicity in the daily press, which reduced assessed valuation on privately owned utility lines from 40 to 5 percent of their full and true value. A proposal by liberals for a graduated land tax to discourage chain and corporate farming was given no consideration.

No attempt was even made to bring about tax revision based on ability to pay. While the ten-mill state levy on real property was retained, a law was passed giving the state authority to borrow $9,000,000 to meet anticipated deficits in current expenditures, the money to be paid not from future iron-ore taxes or from any other taxes upon wealth, but from real-estate tax receipts starting in 1941. The fact that no money was borrowed does not alter the point. Tax relief, however, was extended to the banks when Governor Stassen vetoed a national-bank tax law passed to clarify a situation under which national banks for years had paid their taxes under protest. This was immediately followed by an arbitrary reduction of the assessed valuation of both state and national banks from $21,474,636 in 1938 to $10,149,639 in 1939.

One looks in vain through the legislative record for that "forward-looking youth program," for "more social security," for teachers' tenure, for increased state aid to schools, or for any of the other reforms that the Republicans promised. A state housing authority act was not regarded as of sufficient importance to take up the time of Governor Stassen and of his Republican legislators. One finds, to be sure, a law legalizing a 36-percent interest rate on small loans "to protect the little fellow from the loan shark." One finds also removal from the school budget of an item of $2,500 for teaching the history and purposes of the coöperative movement because, as one GOP legislator put it, "It's too dangerous to teach such things."

After the legislators concluded their labors, Governor Stassen went on the radio to tell the people that "new trails were blazed" and that "progressive and decisive strokes at the very heart of our serious and fundamental problems" had been delivered. There is no record of a thunderbolt from heaven.

It has been charged that Governor Stassen's removal of able Herman Wenzel as conservation commissioner was to have a free hand in dealing with iron-ore leases on state-owned lands. These leases were originally granted for a fifty-year period and provided for a royalty of 25 cents for every ton of ore removed. The leases are now expiring. The legislature in 1937 passed

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an act empowering the conservation commissioner to negotiate for renewal of the leases for a period of not more than twenty-five years and for royalties of not less than 50 cents per ton. Wenzel had insisted that the state should hold out for not less than 75 cents per ton royalties. In justice to Governor Stassen, however, it must be stated that his appointment of Dr. W. L. Strunk to succeed Wenzel does not appear to be the appointment of a political henchman who can be easily handled. However, enough "heat" was produced by the Wenzel charge to make a good politician like Stassen proceed with great caution.

So artfully has Stassen been advertised that a legend has grown up of his strength and popularity in Minnesota and of the satisfaction of Minnesota people with the return of Republican rule. It is pure myth. The truth is that his reëlection next November is by no means certain. A. I. HARRIS

This is the fourth of a series of articles describing conditions in states that have Republican administrations. The preceding pieces, on Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and Michigan, appeared in the issues of April 15, May 6 and August 26. —THE EDITORS

Mexico's Second Six-Year Plan

IF THE THREATENED ALMAZÁN REVOLUTION fizzles out, and Mexico is allowed to achieve her own destiny in peace, the world may yet see a most advanced non-communist democracy established south of the Rio Grande. The program of President-elect Avila Camacho, the second six-year plan, is a striking blueprint for social progress. Formulated by a committee of the Party of the Mexican Revolution, the sponsor of Camacho's candidacy, it was accepted on oath by the President-elect in November, 1939, and presented to the people as his platform. Although it is chiefly a reformist doctrine akin to Roosevelt's New Deal, the specific semi-colonial context of Mexican social economy has forced the "planners" to construct a program looking considerably forward.

The preamble, for example, opens with the emphatic repudiation of "the purely formal judgment of democracy." Although admitting the reality of the class struggle and an exploited class, the planners shy away from a revolutionary concept, "since history indicates the previous gradual redress of social injustice." But, on the other hand, it clearly states: "The effectiveness of the democratic regime cannot exist by free concourse of men's private activity . . . or if the masses, economically feeble, are abandoned in the hands of privileged groups . . . only the state is capable of intervening. . . . It is necessary that the social structure be organized according to a carefully considered plan, in order to achieve the transformation from a liberal democracy . . . to a democracy of workmen."

The plan makes the establishment of the *ejido* (communal land) the basis of the agrarian economy, and proposes the gradual development of the ejidal system into complete collectivization. To accomplish this, the plan calls for land apportionment and financial support of the new *ejidos*, at least at the rate of the previous six years (which would practically complete the distribution of the land to the peasants), and for the mechanization of agriculture, recognizing this as a stimulus to collectivization. Moreover, it demands the "channeling" of credit to *ejidos*, collectives and cooperatives, both worker and peasant; this is to be achieved by further coördinating and extending government banking and intensifying government regulation of private banks. Land is to be assigned on the basis of technical calculations of productivity; coöperatives of consumption and construction are to be promoted; and the government is to control and direct the agrarian system, with the end of adjusting production to market conditions and of modernizing agricultural technique. With ample scholarships, vocational schools of agriculture and ejidal administration schools are to be established. Peasants are to be educated rather than forced into collectivization—not only by the schools but by government centers of promotion. Irrigation, the most fundamental problem after apportionment, will become entirely a state work, with particular acceleration of small works, and apportionment and irrigation will progress coördinatedly. A budget of 25,000,000 pesos for the sexennium will be given to this program. The state will undertake works in erosion control, forestry, nurseries, pioneering and livestock.

Turning to industry and commerce, we find two statements: "to consolidate the national economic independence," and "to insure for the state an ever increasing degree of control over national economy." A kind of hesitant NEP is indicated. In agriculture, state regulation is to be directed toward the coördinated existence of collective, *ejido* and small landowner, with education, preferential credit and grants favoring collectivization. In the industrial area, private capitalism is to be maintained, but within the framework of "a general plan of industrialization" in order to organize centrally the escape from imperialism. This will entail, again as in the early USSR, government control of natural resources, basic and heavy industry, and directive regulation of utilities, banking, trade and prices. Whenever necessary the state will intervene in private production and will enter the utilities field as producer.

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Like the Bolsheviks, who also took over a semi-colonial nation, the Mexican liberals recognize the need for shifting the country from an agricultural to an industrial foundation. Because of Mexico's geography and lack of revolutionary material, this will be a more difficult task here, but the emphasis on machine and tool building and the heavy industries points toward that goal. The plan is uncompromising in its conception of basic matters, such as the direction of domestic distribution and foreign commerce, the considerable increase and organization of credit—bringing all banking within its scope in order to carry through the economic nationalization—the extensive building of coöperatives, and a tax program that bombards the rich from all sides and relieves the poor. Moreover, public works in communications will be centered about the attachment of the rural communities to the principal arteries, second-class rural roads taking preference over all other kinds. American imperialists are not happy to learn that the next six years will mean not only a consolidation of expropriation already achieved, but undoubtedly the extension of that "brigandage."

While the planners are more than usually abstract on the subject of labor, the educational program is particularly forward-looking. For labor, a series of general proposals is postulated, including the refusal to authorize company unions, the promotion of workers' coöperatives for housing and recreation, the erection of vacation centers, health requirements to be met by employers, and social insurance. A minimum wage is to be established according to "economic zones," a factory age minimum is set at fifteen years, or eighteen years in dangerous occupations; but no maximum-hour law is mentioned. A mobile salary scale is suggested and state employment agencies are to be founded. The trade union is recognized as the industrial base.

Besides requiring the increase of rural schools, in accordance with the plan for collectivization, as "the primary activity of the Secretary of Education," the plan calls for the strict regulation of superior education in order to "meet the needs of the society." This is vital in Mexico. By the granting of licenses, the supply and distribution of professional men and technicians, especially in regard to the problem of getting them out of overstocked Mexico City, will be controlled. At the same time the conduct of higher educational institutes will be directed by the state, to ensure that the necessary supply is maintained and that the learning is along "socialist" (that is, socially conscious) lines. Also of strategic importance, considering the Mexican situation, are the emphatic proposals concerning revolutionary (the Mexican Revolution) propaganda, the lack of which has been the most grievous error of the Cárdenas regime. A government publicity department, extensive subsidization of pro-government outlets such as labor publications, and utilization of radio, press and film for propagating revolutionary doctrine are demanded by the program. The plan continues with a general outline for a public-health program.

It can readily be seen that this unique document is distinguished by the presence of concrete ideas for the construction of peace and socialization and the absence of specifications for carrying them out. It is true that every section includes the establishment of a department for study and statistics and that a fundamental requirement of the plan is the mapping of specifications at the start of each year. However, it is also true that the specific proposals regarding appropriations, numbers, locations and kinds of productive units, dams, schools, etc.—which were originally incorporated in the plan by a committee headed by Victor M. Villaseñor, one of the few stanch Marxists in the government, after a half-year of study, were ruled out by the conservative executive committee of the party. The fact that a compromise was found by PRM leaders and the fact that such mild revolutionaries will predominate in the new government are indicative of the "stabilizing" influences which will play upon Camacho when the plan passes from paper to action.

What then are its chances? In the first place, although Camacho does not appear to be the militant progressive Mexico direly needs at this juncture, it is popular to recall that the Calles puppet, Cárdenas, seemed even less so in December, 1934. Camacho not only never led an army against Zapatá, but, on the contrary he has solidly backed every reform of the new Cárdenas. His revolutionary history manifests a singular absence of opportunism. Although the radicals—who were forced to accept his candidacy, Mexicans lacking the futilitarian philosophy of Thomasites and Browderites—prefer to see the future through a glass darkly, there should be no consternation if Camacho sets the foreign and local capitalists on their ears.

The progressive forces in Mexico are (a) numerically strong, (b) organized and (c) exceedingly progressive. True, they had never been tested by a crisis of this magnitude, but the fact that they profoundly recognize the challenge before them is encouraging, and like a bulky but powerful machine they are gradually getting up steam. When Toledano, who is pretty far Left, told the CTM that a fight was in store which would make or break the Revolution, the rank and file answered with thunderous enthusiasm. Despite the numerical superiority of watery liberals in the new Congress, there will not be a dearth of progressives who are hardened fighters. At their base is a working class and peasantry that have been permitted by Cárdenas to come too close to their revolutionary dreams to acquiesce in a standstill government. Offhand, I should say the plan has at least a fighting chance. Undoubtedly it will require fight. That Mexico, apart from the international situation, stands at a crucial point in her revolutionary experience there is no question.

Mexico City DAVID W. NUSSBAUM

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Everything Will Be All Right

THE MOONLIGHT WAS SO CLEAR he could see the hands of his wristwatch. At half past two he sat up and arranged the covers over his wife, and went noiselessly to the working room. It took him hours to write the letter.

Dear Mr. Aitkenhead,

This is at once a note of apology and my resignation from the firm. You've been very patient. I must have been a great trial. I knew that, even before you stopped in front of my desk last Monday and said, "What the hell is the matter with you anyway, John? You haven't been doing your work properly for weeks." The fact is, I haven't been doing my work at all. And it's been months.

I want to get to the point which is not a point really but a series of loosely connected, sketchy and no doubt ambiguous rationalizations. I believe your first impulse will be to toss them aside as such, and ask me to forget the whole involved mess and get back on the job. People, you'll say, don't work for twelve years to get where I am, then quit as a result of some passing mood. All I can do is assure you that while my state of mind may be called a mood, it is by no means a passing one, and that rationalizations, though ambiguous, may have all the validity of objective truth.

I've been a good architect, haven't I? Let me indulge my vanity to the extent of continuing to think so. Now, in this moment of truth, I will confide that at times I did share your generous estimate of the influence some of my things had. I need to look upon myself as having once been able to do good work—if only to ward off insanity. You must not believe I'm being theatrical. You don't know the way I've been. This letter is no indication. Even as I write it, I know it's too lucid—my thoughts are not. I'm through as an architect, perhaps only for the time being, but at any rate through, shot, canceled, null and void. Unfit for any kind of sustained work.

If I didn't think you had a right to some kind of explanation, I wouldn't attempt to jot down such random notions as are running through my head and to dignify them with the semblance of a rationale. Last night I tried to explain this same thing to my little daughter. She overheard a conversation and asked why I was quitting my job. And I told her it was because I no longer wanted to build houses for airplanes to bomb. That's too simple, of course, and smacks of the phony, off-hand. The probable chances of my buildings being bombed are one in five or twenty or thirty thousand. Besides, there is no such direct causal relationship between abstractions and the basic motives of behavior where a man's livelihood is at stake. However, those bombings—remote but not so abstract as that—have become the salient metaphor of my mental state.

You have seen me under a sufficient variety of pressures to know that I have what people call courage. My impression is that I have probably less than the ordinary fear of physical injury. The effect on me of loss by death of men and women I've loved has always been a protective numbness rather than acute or raging grief. But things as they are have reduced me to an utterly incapacitating panic. All the constants I've lived by and worked with have either disappeared or merged into a hopeless jumble. And there *have* been constants for me, relatively constant but still . . . it is *good* to feed a hungry child and *bad* to watch him die of starvation—these are constants. But for me, at least, so many other prerequisites of sanity remain lacking that I find it impossible to function in a craftsmanlike manner.

All my friends seem to take it for granted that the United States will eventually enter the war. Some are for more economic coöperation with England, some for all possible aid short of sending men, and one or two advocate immediate declaration of war on Germany. I could name some pretty fancy odds if I were willing to bet on our staying out. For my own part, I can advocate no course, propose not a single measure, or even develop an academically coherent point of view. My simplest ideas on the subject undergo a series of qualifications that negate them in the very process of development.

I don't want to go into the politics of it. You're familiar enough with my views or lack of them. But I must have some answers, not necessarily *the* answers but *some* answers before I'm again capable of functioning as a responsible person.

I think you knew my father slightly. Did he ever mention that his father, his grandfather and his great-grandfather had started out as Unitarian ministers? Three generations, all told, of fighting preachers in my family. I spent the best part of my vacation last year reading a trunkful of their collected correspondence. Did you ever know that up to and including last Monday you had in your employment the great-great-grandson of Amos Atchison, Doctor of Divinity, Ambassador to Spain, poet, professor of Chemistry at Bowdoin and Brevet Colonel in the Union Army? Sounds like quite an individual. Read "The Flowering of New England" or any good history of the Civil War and you will find mention of fifty like him.

Today a man like that would have to be some kind of genius. Then he was simply an extremely versatile person. More important, he was at home with most of the central issues of his time and, in fact, played a

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role in settling them. He was not an Abolitionist but he knew why he went to war. He was a good ambassador, a noted chemist and almost a good poet. To me his life seems to have had a coherence and a continuity. To him it even seemed to have a purpose.

Now I want to know what happened to the Atchisons after four brave generations. I don't mind not being a universal genius but I would like to know why I'm winding up as a bloody mess instead. So help me, old Amos was not too remarkably bright. How did he manage to orient himself with such certainty?

I have no desire to be a combination minor poet, chemist, brevet colonel and ambassador. But, by God, I would like to know what to fight for. And I *must* know why I plan my buildings.

Perhaps it's the old business about division of labor breeding general ignorance. It takes a lifetime now to master just one isolated specialty. And so perhaps it's unreasonable of me to ask for integration, coherence and continuity in my life. These demands may be nothing but theological survivals recurring in the enfeebled Atchison blood strain. In any event, I find it impossible to continue living off the simple animal spirits of former years.

Perhaps—always perhaps—I have brooded too long and too lovingly over the image of Henry Thoreau living by Walden Pond and going to jail for not paying poll taxes to a government that countenanced slavery. Perhaps that is my idea of an architect who built a home, if only a shack, but knew or thought he knew why. I remember thinking of him last spring when we finished our little Georgian chapel for the Long Island people. If ever there was a more grotesquely futile enterprise. . . .

Again perhaps, it is not within the province of an architect to bother his pretty head about the uses to which his designs are put. Neville Chamberlain is not the fault of the chap who designed 10 Downing Street. Ours not to reason why, ours but to build and die.

Well, I won't take it. If they—I don't know who "they" are but let it stand—if they want messenger boys, let them phone Western Union. The artists and scientists and architects will have to know why or cease to exist as such. I am probably one of the many who may cease to exist as such for simple lack of general equipment. I don't know enough history or politics or economics or any damn thing, and the ignorance is choking me.

Abstractions or not, these things are real enough to have transformed me into the somnambulist you've seen wandering about your office. I can't plan your buildings any more than I can plan my desperate, hysterical search for information out of the scores of new books piled near my reading chair. Last night my little girl took these books and built a fence around herself on the rug. . . . Which brings me to that hoary refrain of every hopeless incompetent—"I have a wife and daughter to feed." Well, the resignation stands but I will have to ask you to let me do ordinary mechanical drafting work until, if ever, I manage to pick up the pieces.

Thank you again for your patience. Yrs.,

John.

He numbered the sheets and began to reread them in order. As soon as he had finished the first few paragraphs he knew that the letter would never be sent. Still, he corrected sentences here and there. Few of them had come out exactly as they were meant to. He had not said the most important things. When he came to the end and saw his name, he remembered all the elaborate signatures he had perfected in high school many years ago. He scrawled a few of them at the bottom of the last page. Then he folded the letter and tore it into small pieces.

Upstairs he tried to get back into bed without awakening his wife, but her eyes were wide open and obviously had been for some time.

"I heard you moving about," she said. "I was worried. Darling, are you all right?"

"Sure," he said. "Don't worry. Everything will be all right."

EDWARD NEWHOUSE

How They Are Voting: II

WE CONTINUE this week the statements by friends of The New Republic about their choices among presidential candidates. They are in alphabetical order.

Roosevelt: because I believe that he is correctly conceiving and interpreting the world situation, and because his sense of direction with respect to domestic problems seems to me progressive, that is, pointed toward the future, and humanistic, that is, dedicated to human welfare.

EDUARD C. LINDEMAN

Living in a colonial dependency I do not have the right to vote. If I had a ballot I should cast it for F. D. Roosevelt for the reasons so admirably and cogently set forth by The New Republic in its review of the New Deal [The New Deal in Review, May 20, 1940]. R. M. LOVETT

I intend to vote for Roosevelt (a) because it is the best assurance under the circumstances that some phases of the New Deal program will be retained; and (b) because the election of Willkie will be construed as a victory for reaction at this time.

CAREY MCWILLIAMS

I shall vote for Roosevelt. Despite inadequacies, the New Deal looks in the right direction and has accomplished much. Wallace is a liberal of presidential caliber. Roosevelt speaks in the authentic American, democratic tradition. His sympathies are with the people. Willkie has ability and, I am sure, good intentions but he is surrounded by reactionaries. The President's leadership in the international crisis

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has been of a very high order and marks him as a statesman. This is no time to swap a good horse for an untried steed. Every vote will count this year and this rules out of consideration candidates of minor parties, especially since they are wrong on the paramount issue, our relation to the war. Besides, I would like to see the third-term bogey laid to rest. JESSE H. NEWLON

Normally I should vote for Norman Thomas as a declaration of social philosophy, but in 1940 that seems precious, a kind of pietistic devotion to consistency, almost egoistic. Since I believe the greatest danger before America (war apart) is fascism under one name or another I am inclined to vote for Roosevelt. Whatever else may be said about him (and I do not take the New Deal seriously one way or the other) I believe him to be genuinely and unshakably resolved to safeguard democratic forms. On the other hand I fear his impulsiveness, his weakness for decisions in flashes and acts in gusts. The times are too dangerous to commit the safety of 130,000,000 persons to the intuitive plunges of any individual. Of Willkie I know too little; but his newly accepted auspices are against him. The corporate spirit of Republicanism, the spirit of loot within the law, is too strong for any individual, however big or fine, once he has merged himself into it. A Republican President of stout enough character, *e. g.*, Theodore Roosevelt, might be able to prevent social indecencies, but he could not give effect to social decencies. So I shall not vote for Willkie. I suppose, then, I shall vote for Roosevelt or go fishing; I have not decided yet. NATHANIEL PEFFER

I shall vote this fall for Franklin D. Roosevelt, in full recognition of the fact that as a person he is not only confused but . . . as a political force has already veered dangerously to the right—with all the fateful possibilities implied. But the Willkie alternative offers nothing of hope for progress. Under Roosevelt, in spite of the need for defense and the possibility of folly and fascism, there is still a chance (since he is a weather vane responsive to public pressure) that the defense program may mean salvation for democracy. "Make Democracy Worth Defending" ought to be our slogan, our program and our demand.

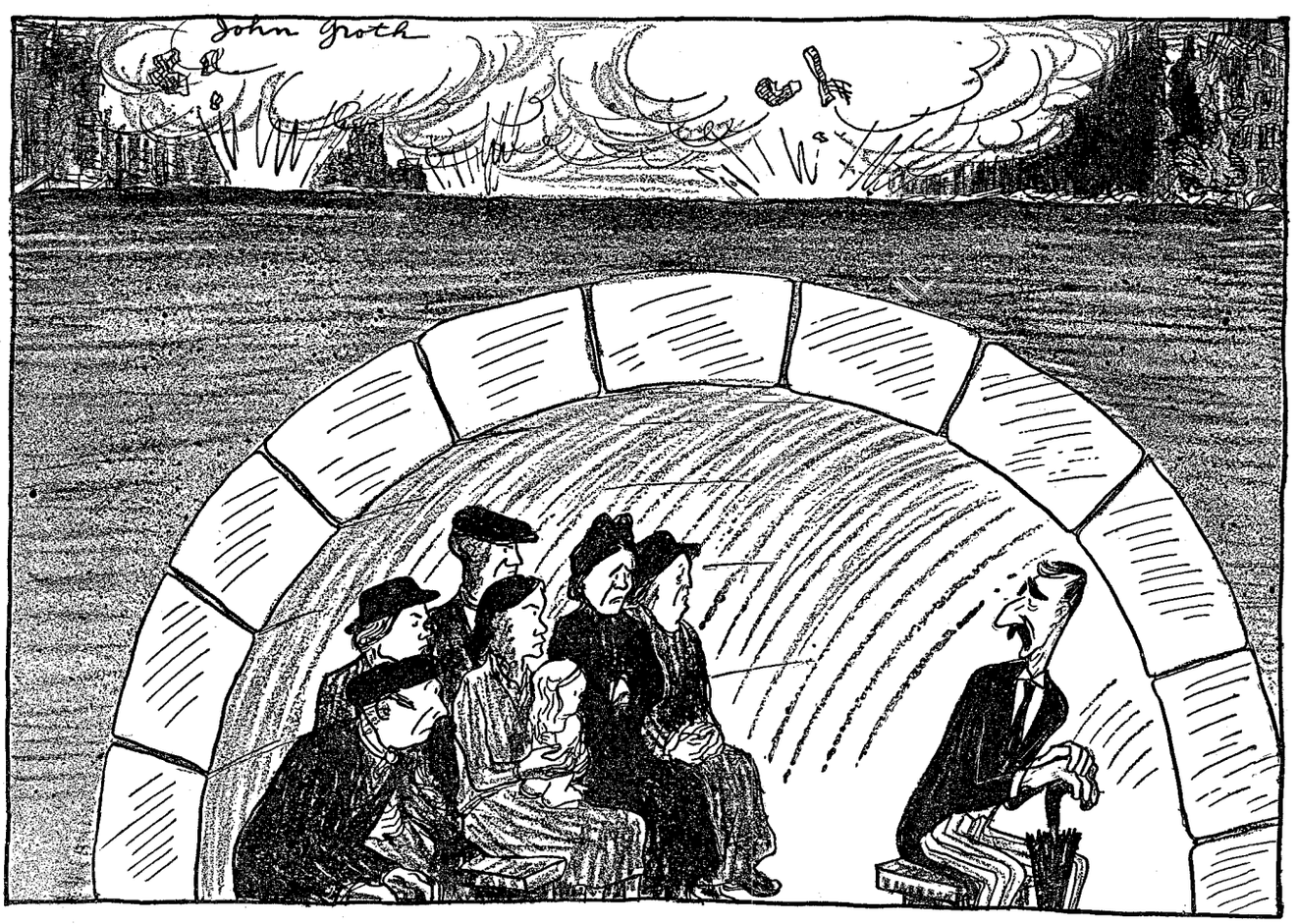
REBECCA PITTS

Roosevelt—because I don't like the company Willkie keeps.

FLETCHER PRATT

Norman Thomas: Though pro-British (more for sentiment than because I think our fate hangs in the balance), I regard intervention as leading to almost certain native fascism. I am against conscription. I'll not support rearmament until the administration—not just The New Republic—conducts a sensible discussion of defense areas and needs. I think we must have a program of change far left of the New Deal if we are to hope for long-range democratic survival. These convictions plus deep distrust of Roosevelt and Willkie as individuals make Thomas the only candidate I can honestly support. RICHARD H. ROVERE

I expect to vote for Norman Thomas, who comes closer to representing what I believe in politically than Roosevelt or Willkie. He is the old-fashioned kind of Socialist, but he has come through this period of confusion on the Left with a record that shines in the dark night. EDMUND WILSON



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Washington Notes

Germans Don't Wait

THE DEFENSE PROGRAM has now reached a point where the NDAC's lack of a chairman—that is, other than Mr. Roosevelt—is beginning to cause delay. Ever since its creation last May, the NDAC has, of course, been criticized for its decapitated state. Up to the present, however, I think that these criticisms have been largely unfair. Mostly they have concealed attacks on Mr. Roosevelt, and have been intended to help Mr. Willkie. In the early weeks of the defense program, the lack of a chairman made no real difference. The need then was to obtain machine tools for the major types of weapons—airplanes, tanks, artillery—and to gather in supplies of strategic materials. These tasks had to be done separately, one at a time. There was no mass of fussy details to be fitted together, no problem of coördination.

There is such a problem today. Where earlier Mr. Knudsen, Mr. Stettinius and their dollar-a-year aides were dealing with a tiny handful of key industrialists, the NDAC is now buying shoes, underpants, handkerchiefs, toilet articles, mosquito netting, plumbing equipment—to quote from one day's list of contracts—from an almost infinite number of manufacturers. Moreover, the program is beginning to touch other government agencies, trade associations, labor unions, consumers' groups. In spite of all efforts, time-consuming frictions are beginning to spring up on all sides.

It is reported that Mr. Knudsen does not want to be chairman. He is one of the country's great production men, a genius at blueprint reading, and he is said to look on the job of settling unceasing, small-scale disputes—a chairman's essential function—with some distaste. From the New Deal's point of view, an excellent choice would be Mr. Leon Henderson, hard-working and able SEC Commissioner and now member of the NDAC with supervision over prices.

The relationship of the New Dealers, as a group, to the NDAC is difficult to describe briefly, yet it needs mentioning. Except for Mr. Henderson, who, stationed inside the NDAC, is taking a conspicuous part in determining defense policy, their attitude is one of increasing hostility. The Treasury and the NDAC have disagreed openly on tax schedules; Assistant Attorney General Thurman Arnold and the NDAC have clashed on anti-trust prosecution. Other conflicts are clearly in the making. It is an altogether unhappy situation.

The issue raised by these disputes, moreover, is not altogether black and white. It is true enough that the dollar-a-year officials of the NDAC are big-business men, the majority of whom either do not understand, or else have no sympathy for, New Deal objectives. Yet the New Dealers themselves supinely permitted Mr. Roosevelt to deliver the defense program over to its present big-business masters. In 1939, when he named Mr. Stettinius head of the short-lived War Resources Board, the New Dealers energetically induced Mr. Roosevelt to reverse himself. Last May, if they had tried, they might have had equal success, and might today find themselves in full command of the arms program.

As it is, the NDAC now belongs to big business. This is a fact that cannot be wished away. As the New Dealers point out, tax policy and the curbing of monopoly, together with such things as relief, youth activities and low-cost housing, are important weapons in preventing a German invasion of our shores. But so, obviously, are combat planes and tanks, whose production the present frictions between the New Dealers and the NDAC can easily delay. What ought the New Dealers to do? An intra-administration fight between the New Dealers and the NDAC, resulting in stoppages in the defense program, probably would not be tolerated by the voters. Can the New Dealers any longer hope to oust the NDAC's dollar-a-year men from their entrenched position?

If a solution is to be found, it probably lies in the exercise of New Deal ingenuity. Possibly the New Dealers will find that they cannot preserve the New Deal's social gains, and at the same time satisfy the NDAC officials' demands. But they ought to drop their present attitude of alarmed standoffishness and see how skillfully they can conduct negotiations. No other course offers fruitful results.

All this gives emphasis to the NDAC's need for a chairman, or coördinator, and particularly one of the proved New Deal allegiance of Mr. Henderson. It will be recalled that, as the original secretary of the TNEC, Mr. Henderson was brilliantly successful in bringing unity to a group of men with wildly discordant economic beliefs. It is likely that if the NDAC had had a single, acknowledged spokesman, whatever his sympathies, with whom the Treasury officials could have dealt with confidence, the breach between the Treasury and the NDAC would never have grown so aggravated as it actually became. Whether an arrangement could have been—or still can be—arrived at between Assistant Attorney General Arnold and the NDAC is less clear.

According to NDAC insiders, the most serious delays to the arms program are now coming from the colonels and majors of the War Department. Army red tape has a special quality of fearsomeness, and it is said to be a rule that the better an officer is in the field leading his troops, the more helpless he is with paper work. Simultaneously the Department is now inducting the National Guard, preparing for conscription, equipping a future fighting force of two million men and perfecting plans to meet a German attack—any one of which endeavors, by army standards, ought to be a full two years' job. Recently a draft contract for steel apparently vanished from sight. After a search, it was discovered in the possession of a procurement-division major who had been quietly engaged in unavailing negotiations for some two weeks with a steel company's junior salesman. A five minutes' telephone conversation between Mr. Stettinius and the steel company's president, and the deal was completed. It should be added that the NDAC officials are profuse in their praise of General Marshall and Assistant Secretary of War Patterson, whom they invariably describe as the two hardest-working men in Washington.

Washington T. R. B.

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Other People's Money

Why All the Hoarding?

IT IS NOW fairly obvious that the hoarder is again abroad in the land. For some reason some people are tucking their United States currency away behind their electric clocks, in the box-spring mattresses and in other standard shelters for sterile savings.

There is more money outside the Treasury and theoretically in circulation in this country than ever before in its history. There are gentlemen west of the Mississippi and south of the Ohio who ought to regard this as a blessed development. They have always preached that what the nation needed was more money. Well, now we have more money. In 1929 we had not quite five billions. Now we have eight billions. So we ought to be 60 percent more prosperous. Unhappily we are not.

In 1929 we had $4,700,000,000 in circulation. As the depression deepened that amount expanded until by 1934 it was $5,700,000,000. Then, as government funds flowed out and business picked up under this dole, circulation decreased until the recession returned in 1937 when it expanded to $5,700,000,000. It has increased ever since. Last year at this time it was around $7,000,000,000. Now it is $8,000,000,000.

This increase, of course, has nothing to do with briskness in business. It is fairly well established that the country does not need more than around $5,000,000,000 or $5,500,000,000 at the most to support the money transactions of the most prosperous period. The amount outstanding is not as a rule a matter which the government fixes arbitrarily. The government issues currency in response to requests for it by the banks. Banks do not like to carry too much cash. When, therefore, they find themselves with more cash than they require, they deposit it or return it to the Federal Reserve Banks. When they need more they apply to the Reserve Banks for more and those banks issue more. The demand for currency and the amount outstanding is established by the people. When individuals and merchants and business men need additional cash they get it from their banks. When they have more than they need they put it into their banks. This demand and withdrawal pressure for money is passed on by the banks to the Reserve Banks. The people themselves do not require more than a moderate amount of money. And all together, the money in the bank, the money in the tills of business men and the money in the pockets of the people is adequate when it is as much as five billion dollars. When it gets over that, as a rule, it is because the people themselves are keeping it out of their banks. They are hoarding.

Now the heaviest hoarding in twenty-five years in this country was in 1933 and 1934 following the bank collapse. Then circulation rose to $5,700,000,000. That sum of money outstanding included all that was needed for business and what was hidden away in tin boxes. Today the currency outstanding is $8,000,000,000. There is therefore ground for supposing that around three billion dollars at the very least is in hidden hoards.

One explanation made in banking circles is that this is largely the work of foreigners who have sent their money here, converted it into dollars and hidden the dollars away in bank vaults. That doubtless accounts for some, but certainly not all. Most foreigners who send money here are people who are money-conscious, have large amounts and know their way about. They know therefore that this kind of hoarding is not intelligent. The fact, undoubtedly, is that both foreign and American owners of dollars are hiding them and this because they are in fear of some danger which they cannot fathom.

It is really not a very wise thing to do. In 1933 a great deal of hoarding was of gold dollars which people with funds could get at their banks in those days. There is some sense in hiding gold, if you want to hoard at all. Because there is always the chance that currencies will be devalued and the gold will buy more dollars later. But there is no sense at all in hiding currency. For, in the event of inflation, currency—and, of course, credit claims—are the only things that are sure to lose in value.

I came across a farmer in 1935 who, anticipating inflation, had bought and stored three tons of iron on his farm. That was at least intelligent hoarding. Storing currency is sheer folly.

Commissioner Jerome Frank feels aggrieved that in criticizing the SEC for not pressing the enforcement of the Utility Holding Company Act more vigorously I have reflected on him. I have on a number of occasions deplored the lethargy of the utility division of the SEC in dawdling along in its duty under the act to compel a simplification of the utility holding-company structures. But I have, I think, usually made it plain that my criticism was directed at the Commission's conduct in the first two years of the act. Also it was directed not at the Commission as a whole but at the utility division. Commissioner Frank was not even a member of the Commission at that time and certainly could not be included in my complaints.

Nor have I wished to complain about the utility division as at present made up. I have always referred to the work of that division when it was under the direction of Commissioner Ross. Mr. Ross, who is now dead, enjoyed a great reputation in the field of publicly owned utility operation. His record in that field I have recognized and never underrated. But his appointment to enforce the utility act was a tragic blunder. And the result was that the enforcement of that act was deferred to a time when enforcement was difficult because the mood for reform was departing swiftly from our midst. Out of that excellent act we have, as a result, received little or nothing important.

JOHN T. FLYNN

Every Man Is Inner Dark

Whatever its disguise may be
One sees the skulled hilarity,
The shadowed grace behind the dance,
The fear behind the arrogance:

Every man is inner dark,
Every night a steep domain—
The maiden cowers behind her beauty,
The ape behind the brain.

TOM BOGGS

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For Better, for Worse

IT IS NEARLY TWO MONTHS since I reported on the March of Time's "Ramparts We Watch," during which time there have been several kinds of hold-up on the picture's release. But now it is out in New York I'd like to say again it is not one of those things you should care to be a party to. I said before and I don't feel it any less: "To leave out what we have learned, to say for truth what we know was false, to pass over the misery, the stupidity, the greed, the waste and slaughter, is to blow up a great recruiting poster, an invitation to leave your head outside. We may be proud to be America. We may be ready to stand back of it. But these are just the times when we should turn away from any group of cheapjacks using such times and such high and noble emotions for nothing in the world but to sell their stinking little tentshow for money."

It is a relief to find a couple of movies as such around at the second-run houses. It is perfectly safe to see "The Great McGinty," which is a little different and quite a lot of fun. It has mainly to do with the rise through city politics from soup line to Governor's mansion of a toughie who learns very fast. Unfortunately for him—and to some extent for us—he gets married to a young divorcée with two rather prominent kids. First it's for convenience, and then (surprise) it's for fun, and then she wants him to buck the machine and clean out corruption. He does and they nail him—except that he escapes to tend a very pleasant bar somewhere in the banana country, where he tells the story that makes the picture in flashback.

The picture is out of the ordinary partly because of its delightful and wicked jabs at the various forms of the squeeze, the shakedown and ballot-stuffing as practised by a Tammany set-up; partly for the way its small matters are handled. Preston Sturges, who both wrote and directed, takes credit for all of this. This is his first directing job and where has he been all our lives? "The Great McGinty" does have its rather soggy moments and occasionally a heavy touch right in the middle of the deftest humor (for example, the Charley Chase tiptoe of the jailbreak, contrasted to the neat steal of the guard's paper and the perfect chairfall). Brian Donlevy is a little given to mugging, but that is more than made up for by Akim Tamiroff as the political boss ("We'll be at the mercy!") and a swell assortment of small parts. Preston Sturges has that sense of the incongruous which makes some of the best gayety; on the whole he gets more fast doings and laughs packed in here than you've seen in quite a while.

"They Drive by Night" is also around and worth looking into, especially if you can get up and go when Ida Lupino insists on acting in the later sequences (incidentally, these were a complete and shameless steal from a Bette Davis picture, "Bordertown," I think). At least half the film was "suggested" by the Bezzerides novel, "Long Haul," and in this I wish they had been more suggestible, for the trucking stuff is very good and could have not only made the whole picture but made it better.

Two brothers are wildcatting up and down the West Coast, one jump ahead of the Shylock and always behind on sleep. But they are luckier than most others and get their truck paid for with enough money ahead to buy their own loads and beat the market. But there is still the worst nightmare, of going to sleep and off the road, and this one catches up with them finally—about the middle of the picture. After that, except for some fine work by Alan Hale, you can haul it away: one brother loses an arm and the other gets a good job and starts running away from Ida Lupino.

I don't know why this split in the middle was necessary, because there was so much more they could have done with what they were doing. There was a lot of it in the book—going broke on a load of apples, say, and then getting into the market just at the time apples weren't worth dumping off the truck. Or finding no load and having to go back light. All the various fines, fees and hold-ups. Breakdowns. It could easily have been worked into the story, because the motion of trucks rolling alone is enough to give the semblance of action, and they had a fine lot of life in the roadside diners and the markets, and for feminine interest they already had Ann Sheridan in the story and a little of her will carry quite a distance.

Well, it's their picture, not mine. George Raft makes a good enough trucker, if not a flexible screen player: Humphrey Bogart has the smaller part, which seems wrong way around. Roscoe Karns is in it for comedy relief, and the odd character bits are good. Joe Breen was looking the other way again on some of this dialogue, which is salty and fast throughout, and it's a relief to hear people talk like people talking. Add a couple of terrific wrecks and a good party. As I was saying, when it is good it is no turkey.

You may soon get a chance to see what somebody else thinks are the great parts of the great picture nobody ever saw—the miles of film Sergei Eisenstein exposed down in Mexico, some thousands of feet of which were released as "Thunder Over Mexico" in 1933. Marie Seton has resurrected the original and edited from it about an hour of film that is supposed to follow the master's original idea, under the title "Time in the Sun." It makes an interesting travelogue with pageantry, social overtones, self-conscious mugging natives, and fine though trick photography (Tisse). It was not taken or edited with imagination and moves heavily when it moves at all. The plain truth of the matter is that Eisenstein went to Mexico for some documentary stuff and there got drunk partly on his own reputation and partly on the million different things that could be photographed if you spent the rest of your life at it on subsidy; and that Upton Sinclair took a villainous drubbing for pulling him away in the end and trying to salvage some of that naïve investment. A way to be a film critic for years was to holler about this rape of great art, though it should have taken no more critical equipment than common sense to see that whatever was cut out, its clumping repetitions and lack of film motion could not have been cut *in*. The greatness of that heavy hoax was never left on the cutting-room floor; it was left where it started—inside a lot of very suggestible but not very good heads.

OTIS FERGUSON

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A Communication

In Defense of Mr. Willkie

SIR: I enclose a copy of An Open Letter to the Editors of The New Republic by Mr. Wendell L. Willkie's personal representative, Mr. Russell W. Davenport, in response to The New Republic's supplement "This Man Willkie" and subsequent references to that supplement in your periodical. Mr. Davenport, as you doubtless know, is with the campaign train in the West and, at his direction, I have signed the letter for him.

New York City JOHN S. MARTIN

SIR: Your recently published supplement "This Man Willkie" may not, in your opening words, be a "horror story" but it is nevertheless an extraordinary piece of fiction. To take a single instance, there is the statement on page 327 that Commonwealth and Southern's subsidiaries have in force only two labor contracts with the AFL. The most elementary care in investigation would have revealed the fact that these companies have no less than twenty-one existing contracts with the AFL and one with the CIO.

The section "Mr. Willkie in Business" rests entirely on a fundamental premise that reveals appallingly slipshod reporting. The writer suggests that since Commonwealth and Southern was organized in 1929, since the market collapse occurred in 1929, and since Mr. Willkie joined the firm of Weadock and Willkie as counsel for Commonwealth and Southern in 1929, Mr. Willkie is therefore responsible for such criticisms as may be made of the organization of Commonwealth and Southern and its common stock exchange offers. The New Republic's writer, however, has completely disregarded the fact that the year 1929 was twelve months long. The facts are that the discussions relative to the organization of Commonwealth and Southern took place prior to May 23, 1929. On that day the enterprise was incorporated. The offer by Commonwealth and Southern to exchange its common stock for the common stock of the subsequently merged holding companies was made on June 12, 1929. Whether or not the organization of Commonwealth and Southern is in any way subject to criticism, Wendell Willkie had nothing to do with it. *He did not come to New York and did not join the firm of Weadock and Willkie as Commonwealth and Southern counsel until October 1, 1929.* As he has repeatedly stated, he did not participate in, nor was he even aware of, the discussions relative to the organization or exchange offerings of Commonwealth and Southern. The entire thesis of "Mr. Willkie in Business" obviously falls to the ground.

Similarly, The New Republic has apparently accepted some exceedingly poor research in the section "Mr. Willkie and Labor." I have referred, at the beginning of this letter, to The New Republic's misstatement with regard to the number of labor contracts in force among Commonwealth and Southern's subsidiaries. The section charges those subsidiaries with hiring labor spies and The New Republic's subsequent issue of September 16, 1940, echoes this charge with a long essay attempting to suggest that the word "espionage" as used in connection with the La Follette Committee's investigation necessarily meant labor spies. Such is not the case. Mr. Willkie has stated in the press, and in his behalf I reiterate, that any statement which implies that there was any such testimony before the La Follette Committee or that any company of the Commonwealth and Southern system ever employed any spy for the purpose of interfering with labor activities is completely false. Agents have been employed for normal corporate purposes. For instance, the $31,000 allegedly spent by Georgia Power Company on "labor spies" was actually spent for inspectors to check street-car service and cash receipts. This is a common practice in the business nor have the unions ever objected to the same. To claim that such a practice constitutes the use of "labor spies" is a complete distortion of the facts.

Equally without foundation are The New Republic's charges against Mr. Willkie with regard to the so-called Ashwander case, the nineteen-company suit, the Chattanooga situation, rural power-line development and subsidiary companies' labor relations. It would, indeed, be possible to go through The New Republic's supplement, paragraph by paragraph, showing how innumerable misstatements have been compounded into a series of attacks on Mr. Willkie that cannot for an instant be supported by the facts. I believe that the highly important factual inaccuracies already cited should be enough to give pause to those who may be in the habit of taking what they read in The New Republic for granted. Mr. Willkie has prepared a long, detailed statement answering all charges made or implied in your article, a copy of which I will gladly send you if you would consider printing it as another supplement.

RUSSELL W. DAVENPORT,
per J. S. M.

[A reply to Mr. Davenport's communication appears in the editorial section. – THE EDITORS]

The Bandwagon

I was interested to read in "Life in a Destroyer" (July 20), that in the last war sea lions were trained, though not used, for submarine detection. They are among the most intelligent of animals, and their capabilities are utterly wasted in balancing balls on their noses in a circus arena. It might be feasible to train them once more, and use them as a second-line defense to our present admirably organized scientific methods of submarine hunting. A few bucketfuls of fish are a small price to pay for the constant under-water vigil of some of the most aware and acute creatures in the animal kingdom. – *From the correspondence section of Picture Post, the English illustrated weekly.*

Conscription was among the subjects discussed by the debs and subdebs who gathered with darting glances and fluttery bursts of laughter, at the Sherry Netherland yesterday to attend Mrs. Sumner W. Taylor's first Mother and Daughter luncheon. "If things get worse they may do away with proms," said one to another, and they went on to discuss the diminishing stagline. – *From the Society Page in The World-Telegram.*

Dear Martha Carr: I am 30 years old and have been married 12 years to a man who beats me four times a week. In spite

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of this I still love him. I am continually covered with bruises and the neighbors are always asking about them. What shall I answer?—MISTREATED ONE. – *From a broken-hearts column in The St. Louis Post Dispatch.*

Hoover, whose tanned face and light suit attested to his investigation of sabotage and espionage in Southern California's aircraft plants, arrived from Los Angeles via United Airlines. – *From The San Francisco Chronicle.*

Lover, Stay Away from My Door

LADY CHATTERLY'S LOVER, by D. H. Lawrence. Unexpurgated, except for the obscene passages. Special Ass'n price, 98 cents. – *From the catalogue of the Union Library Association of New York.*

The Voice of Experience

WANTED—Capable housekeeper, one who can cook and go home nights. 37 Hill Street. – *Classified ad in The Barre (Vt.) Times.*

What That Man Needs Is a Rest

Robert Lee Perry's wife has presented him with five children within the last year, a set of girl triplets and a set of boy twins. There are two other children. Perry was let off the WPA some time before the twin boys were born.

After learning of Perry's latest plight the WPA forwarded him an affidavit. If the need were great enough, it said, he might be put to work on a new project. – *News item in The New Orleans Times-Picayune.*

So-What-Happened Department

Billows dethroned champion Bud Ward by 3 and 2. – *From PM, September 13, page 30.*

So what happened? Ward was beaten, 4 and 3, by Ray Billows. – *From PM, September 13, page 30.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column; $1 will be paid for each item used. Address Bandwagon, care of The New Republic. Please enclose the original clipping. – THE EDITORS

Correspondence

Our Reporting Readers: the South

SIR: Old regulars down here were ruffled about the way their Bankhead was stopped by the President. The choice of Wallace is not popular. Most displeased are large planters and cotton and tobacco buyers who have been hit hardest by crop curtailment. A good bit of opposition is coming from Agricultural Extension Services. Reason: Wallace has failed to follow the Extension Directors. Some heads of independent agencies such as the triple-A or FSA (they have horns!) hardly pay them a social call. This means their political network, composed of a farm agent and a home-demonstration agent in each county, will be inactive. The Hatch Law, you know.

All this is adding to the joy of big-business men down here, and the more numerous Southern-born agents for corporations with headquarters in Manhattan, who have launched a noisy campaign for Willkie. In Birmingham the Alabama Power Company (part of Commonwealth and Southern), Tennessee Coal and Iron, and the rest of the Southern States Industrial Council have Mable Jones West and her Democratic Women's Club of Alabama, Inc., leading their Willkie campaign.

Mable won her place in 1928. Her ingenuity was responsible for the Alabama Women's League for White Supremacy, whose 50,000 members helped keep Alabama "safe" in the Democratic ranks. The Birmingham Age-Herald, in an editorial, praised Mrs. West by name as "the one person most responsible for this great victory." Since 1928 Mable has been busy: head of the Women's Division of Alabama's Ku Klux Klan; chief lobbyist for the above-mentioned confederation; campaign manager for many state and city candidates. Hers was the group that had the Birmingham police march into the first Southern Conference for Human Welfare and force segregation. She led the fight for retention of the poll tax when the Alabama legislature was debating it last year. Led by cotton-mill men angry about wages and hours and assisted by the Duke Power Company equally angry about Santee-Cooper, Republicans are beginning to beat the drums for Willkie in darkest South Carolina. Willkieite big-business men are having a harder time in North Carolina (my home state). They made a clean sweep in recent Democratic primaries. (Candidate backed by Labor's Non Partisan League got less than 15,000 votes.) Victory was due to the support of Dr. Ralph McDonald, who led a liberal protest against the sales tax in 1936 and came uncomfortably close to winning. This year, playing excellent politics, McDonald picked all the "right" candidates. He has placed his followers in seemingly routine but important positions in the election machinery.

Even more difficult to handle will be the rank and file of North Carolina Republicans. Three-fourths of them are from a dozen mountain counties. Their Republicanism is inherited from great-grandfathers who refused to fight to make the South safe for slavery and the down-country planters. Sermons preached against the state's big-business men are the substance of their campaigning. They care more about keeping jobs in the dozen courthouses they control than risking what they have by consorting with moneybag Democrats.

Tennessee, which often goes Republican, looks like a sure thing for Roosevelt. (1) The TVA is located in the heart of that state's traditionally Republican section. (2) Despite the recent lynchings north of Memphis, Negroes in Tennessee are voting in much larger numbers than at any time since Reconstruction. Crump is having his confederates in Nashville and Chattanooga sign them up as Democrats. (3) Cordell Hull.

Reports from Florida indicate that Barnard McFaden, who got a big vote in a recent Democratic primary for Congress, is going Republican. Senator Byrd's newspaper is telling Virginians some mighty nice things about Willkie.

There is another thing. In South Carolina there is no secret ballot for general elections. In several counties no Republican ballots are sent out to the polls. People who wish to vote Republican must get tickets from the state committee themselves and take them to the polls. In Georgia many precincts do not bother to open. I have reliable evidence of both of these practices. Absentee balloting, the use of "markers," "unit" voting, etc., is prohibited in primaries in North Carolina. There are no such prohibitions for general elections. In only a few counties in North Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia do Republicans have genuine representations on boards of election.

Oh, but the Republicans are making a lot of noise. They are going to get more votes than usual, too. If this election does not prove to be the beginning of a two-party system in the South (we are promised such a beginning each election), it may help to smoke out of the Democratic Party the worst of its Tories. Something to hope for, anyway.

Montgomery, Ala. G. R. MASON

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O. K., Milt

SIR: My grandfather was a remarkable man.

He died at the age of 178, eyes clear, brain quick, teeth bought and paid for.

He shot a bull moose in an elevator.

Died when he was pushed out of the seventeenth floor of a building. Old age.

He was a pretty tough old guy. He had to be, 'cause his moniker was seventy-three karat, solid whipped cream: Millard [one word censored] Lampell.

And so is mine.

So you can stop addressing my letters to "Milt" and start addressing them to Mill or Millard any time you say.

Now you also know my middle name, and if there is an ounce of friendship in your heart, you will keep it secret.

New York City MILL [ONE WORD CENSORED] LAMPELL

No; He's Not from Business

SIR: In your editorial this issue (August 19) you say: "It seems to us an ominous portent that Mr. Willkie comes from the same group in the community as Chamberlain . . . and Daladier." Where do you think Roosevelt comes from, the Pittsburgh steel mills?

New York City SAMUEL ROMER

Corporals Speak the Same Language

SIR: Corporals seem to speak the same language. Is there not a familiar ring in the report by Alexander Herzen of the interview between his father and Napoleon I in Moscow, in 1812:

> Napoleon began with those customary phrases, abrupt remarks, and laconic aphorisms to which it was the custom for thirty-five years to attribute some profound significance, until it was discovered that they generally meant very little. He then abused Rostopchín for the fires, and said it was mere vandalism; he declared, as always, that he loved peace above all things and that he was fighting England, not Russia; he claimed credit for having placed a guard over the Foundling Hospital and the Uspenski Cathedral; and he complained of the Emperor Alexander. "My desire for peace is kept from His Majesty by the people round him," he said.
>
> My father remarked that it was rather the business of the conqueror to make proposals of peace.
>
> "I have done my best. I have sent messages to Kutûzov, but he will hear of no discussions whatever and does not acquaint his master with my proposals. I am not to blame—if they want war they shall have it!" – *Memoirs of Alexander Herzen.*

Cincinnati, O. MINNA H. BREUER

Hotfoot

SIR: There are a number of effective replies that might be made to Colonel Lindbergh's latest speech and so it is discouraging to find The New Republic stooping to such intellectual hotfoot as "That Lindbergh does not see . . . can be attributed to the fact that he is an expert on just one subject. That subject is flying airplanes, not statesmanship or speechmaking." I don't wish to be unkind—oh, well, not too unkind, then—but all the article lacks is the caption, "Shoemaker and His Last."

If the majority of the editors in this country are determined —and they seem to be—to set down the rule that nobody shall discuss any subject in which he is not an unquestioned, bona-fide expert, then the majority of editors are hell-bent for committing hari-kiri.

For example, do the editors of The New Republic expect its readers to believe they are unquestioned, bona-fide experts on the following subjects, all discussed in the same current comment of the August 12 issue: international law involved in sending ships for young refugees; plant expansion; priority contracts and industrial bottlenecks; Hitler's British military campaign; Molotov's foreign policy; the new program of the Japanese fascist cabinet; accuracy of national polls; fifth-column activities and their constitutional control; Dr. Westrick's relations with members of American Big Business. . . .

Horse marrons, gentlemen, horse marrons.

Providence, R. I. WILLIAM MCNULTY

Denial

SIR: John T. Flynn makes the statement [July 29] that at the Republican Convention this year I proposed a plan "for an amalgamation of the parties for the duration of the crisis with Roosevelt for President. . . ."

This statement is untrue. For the sake of the record, I should be grateful if you would publish this denial.

Los Angeles, Calif. B. M. ANDERSON JR.

SIR: Dr. Anderson changes the phrasing of my piece. I did not say he "proposed a plan" to the Republican Convention. I said he was "an onlooker" at the Convention and that while there he had made a suggestion. He did not make it to the Convention but to a newspaperman who repeated it to me the instant he left Dr. Anderson after a talk in the lobby of the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel. Maybe Dr. Anderson wasn't serious. My informant believed that he was.

New York City JOHN T. FLYNN

From The New Republic Mail Bag

It seems we'll never get space to print a letter against Granville Hicks signed by "Executive Committee, Six Professional Branches, Communist Party, New York." Commenting on Mr. Hicks's defection (The New Republic, June 17), the Six Branches say that Mr. Hicks misunderstood Marxism, misrepresented the affair between the party and the popular front, did not appreciate the Communist platform, and slandered the Soviet Union. They "find it difficult to recall an occasion when Mr. Hicks joined his voice with ours in protest," and in short renounce Mr. Hicks by proving he isn't there. "A pitiable end, Mr. Hicks," is the last sentence and we rather like it, but it took them around 1,000 words to wind up for the pitch, and the price of paper is up these days.

Third-Class Letter Box. – While our anti-poetry editor was napping, Alfred B. Engelhard of Gary, Indiana, slipped into the chair with the following, which he said was inspired by something he read in the papers which read: "*Hitler declares he has no aspirations in the Western Hemisphere.*"

The Siamese carry twisted kris
As also does the Burman;
But on all this sphere there is none I fear
Like a self-effacing German.

The Hindustanis pack knives on their fannies
While the Kurds are full of vermin,
But alive or dead there is none I dread
Like a self-effacing German.

That the Voodoo mystic is quite sadistic
Is easy to determine,
But I'd sooner rely on the Evil Eye
Than a self-effacing German.

So when Hitler roars to forswear these shores,
Please recall this little sermon:
Many erstwhile friends have met bitter ends
From a self-effacing German.

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Books in Review

Mr. Brooks's Second Phase[1]

VAN WYCK BROOKS has now suffered the fate of many a good writer before him. Beginning as an opposition critic, read by a minority of the public, he has lived to become a popular author, read by immense numbers of people and awarded a Puliter prize—with the result that the ordinary reviewers are praising him indiscriminately and the highbrows are trying to drop him. One has seen the same sort of thing happen with Eugene O'Neill, with Edna Millay, with Hemingway, with Thornton Wilder—and always to the general obscuration of their actual merits and defects.

Let me begin then by stating some of the objections which are being made to Brooks's books on New England by those readers to whom it is most distasteful to see him become the darling of the women's clubs.

1. Brooks's work falls into two distinct divisions, with the break just before his book on Emerson. The early Brooks was somber and despairing. In the tones of a Jeremiah, he cried out against America for ruining her writers and against the American writers for allowing themselves to be ruined. This period reached its nadir of gloom in the essay on "The Literary Life in America" contributed to Harold Stearns's symposium "Civilization in the United States," in which Brooks announced the total extinction of literary genius in America just at the moment when it was again lighting up. But he had already produced work of great importance in "America's Coming-of-Age" and "The Ordeal of Mark Twain"; and the Brooks of this early period was a searching and original critic, probably the principal source of ideas on the cultural aspects of America of the period just after the War. People got from him, not only, as they did also from Mencken, a sense of the second-rateness of recent American writing and a conviction of the need for something better, but also a historical perspective and an analysis of the causes of what was wrong. Though one ended by becoming exasperated with the early gloomy Brooks, one owed him an immense amount, and one associated what one owed him with his sense of the national failure.

It was then with something of surprise that we found him, in "The Flowering of New England," suddenly chortling, beaming and crooning in a manner little short of rapturous over those same American household classics —Lowell, Longfellow, Emerson, *et al.*—whose deficiencies, in his memorable chapter on "Our Poets" in "America's Coming-of-Age," he had so unflinchingly brought to our notice. In the attempt to provide America, as he said, with a "usable" literary past, he seemed to some to have gone too far in the direction of glorification and to have substituted for the bitter insight of "The Ordeal of Mark Twain" the pageant of a historical mural, in which the figures were larger than life and the colors laid on too brightly, and in which the hidden springs of character were not examined at all. One missed the intensity of his early work; he seemed now to be *too much* pleased with everybody; there was no longer any tension of conflict.

2. Moreover, the bold brushwork of these frescoes involved an inordinate development of a feature of Brooks's methods which had figured with unhappy results in "The Pilgrimage of Henry James." Mr. Brooks in an evil hour read the books of a Frenchman named Léon Bazalgette, who wrote lives of Thoreau and Whitman, and who adopted the practice of describing his subjects in a medium confected of phrases taken without quotation marks from their works. Mr. Brooks has imitated this practice: he has attempted to convey the precise qualities of the literary personalities of his New Englanders by compounding a kind of paste out of their writings. This paste he spreads on the page and expects it to give us the essence of his author. But, though sometimes, as in the case of an inferior figure like Longfellow, he does succeed in extracting thus a tone and color which we should not easily catch in dipping into Longfellow himself, since it is necessary to boil down a good deal of such a poet in order to get a distinguishable flavor—on the other hand, with a first-rate writer like Emerson or Hawthorne or Thoreau, you simply get a sort of predigested sample which seems to have had all the vitamins taken out of it and which causes a constant irritation to an admirer because it presents itself as a travesty that is always just off-key and off-color.

This is especially a pity, because Brooks is himself an individual and beautiful writer, of a fine clarity of time and accent, and what we get in these confected passages is neither the true Brooks nor his subject. Furthermore, the method involves in a sense a quasi-abdication of the critic, who is here neither speaking about his subject nor allowing his subject to speak for himself. What is the value of all the "as one might call its" scattered through the pages of Brooks? If it is Brooks who is calling it this or that, the interpolation is totally unnecessary; if, on the other hand, it is someone else, the author ought to tell us who. What is the explanation of the statement, in connection with Charles Eliot Norton, that "his field was of imagination all compact"? If the sentence is Brooks's sentence, he has no business to load it down with this cliché; if the opinion is that of some previous critic, the cliché was not worth preserving. Who is it who exclaims of Francis Parkman, "*Eccovi*, this child has been in hell"? Mr. Brooks, pointing up his picture with a familiar literary allusion, or some Bostonian addicted to Dante? Many phrases which are striking in their contexts lose their significance and seem merely grotesque when they are embedded in the text of someone else. Thus we read in Brooks's account of Louisa M. Alcott that, "She liked to watch the moon. She had good dreams. She had pleasant times with her mind." It takes a footnote to explain this last phrase, which turns

[1] New England: Indian Summer, by Van Wyck Brooks. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 557 pages. $3.75.

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out to have been taken from a diary written at the age of twelve and to sound quite natural there. Surely it would have been much more sensible simply to have quoted the diary in the first place.

3. It has sometimes been said of Mr. Brooks that he is not really a literary critic because he is not interested in literature as an art and lies indeed under serious suspicion of not being able to tell chalk from cheese. There is in this charge this much of truth: Van Wyck Brooks's interest in literature is mainly from the point of view of its immediate social significance. He is not particularly sensitive to form and style in themselves, and he is not particularly responsive to any other than social morals. Thus, in this latest volume, you find the extraordinary statement that there was "no unity" in Henry Adams' style and that, "except for recurrent conceptions and phrases" his various books "might all have been written by various hands"—whereas a diligent reader of Adams would certainly be able to recognize a paragraph from any of his books by its tone and rhythm alone. The bland, ironic, weak-backed sentences of "The Education of Henry Adams" are already in "The History of the United States." And thus in the charges brought, on page 402, against the later Henry James, we find the strange complaint that James is in the habit of describing his characters "as 'eminent,' as 'wonderful,' 'noble' and 'great'" and then making them perform discreditable actions—an objection which shows a complete incomprehension both of James's all-pervasive irony and of the complexity of his moral vision. And if you look up, among the poems, say, of Lowell, the lyrics recommended by Mr. Brooks, you are likely to be disappointed.

It is perhaps true that Mr. Brooks has to have the positions of his authors settled for him before he begins. He simply accepts his subject as an objective historical fact, a star of less or greater magnitude, and studies it in its known relations, its already established orbit. This assumption is borne out by his extravagant praise of mediocrity among his contemporaries combined with his puzzled indifference to some of the most important writers of his time at the moment of their first emergence. This ineptitude at appraising for himself becomes particularly conspicuous in connection with this general history. The early Brooks was always comparing our writers with European writers to the disadvantage of the United States. The later Brooks is whooping it up for America's "usable past," but he still leaves in doubt the comparative values of the American writers he is discussing in relation to the rest of the world. Doesn't Emerson look meager beside Goethe? Wasn't Thoreau, by any standards, one of the first prose writers of the nineteenth century? Isn't Henry James, for all his shortcomings, a more important novelist than Thackeray? Brooks does not try to answer these questions—of a kind that have been forced on the attention of the expatriate Eliot and James and which they have sometimes discussed acutely. He has been so far, in his history of our literature, almost exclusively occupied with his subjects in relation to the American scene.

When one has said all this, however, one finds that one has done little more than define the terms themselves on which Mr. Brooks has undertaken an immense and difficult task; and what is valid in these objections applies in general less to his new volume than to the one that went before.

Even in "The Flowering of New England" the nature of the task itself partly explains the extravagances. The magnification of the New England poets may be justified on the ground that the author is presenting them as they presented themselves to the audience that thought them great; and it is one of the most striking proofs of Mr. Brooks's possession of the historical imagination that he is able to see the events of the past, not merely in retrospect, that he does not merely estimate facts, sum up tendencies, compose obituaries, but that he can show us movements and books as they loomed upon the people to whom they were new. The reader of "The Flowering of New England" beheld the Boston of the first decades of the Republic coming at him, as it were, head-on; and this was what made the book so important. It brought home even to people who knew something of the subject as no other book had done what post-revolutionary New England had meant to the America of its day as the cultural spokesman for the new humanity that was to be built in the United States. To get this over to a generation which had known only a shriveled Boston overlaid with industrial vulgarity and who had probably not very often reopened the New England poets since their schooldays, perhaps required some large expanse of canvas and some special expenditure of oils.

In his "Indian Summer" of New England, Mr. Brooks is aiming at a different effect: he has here to show us the old virtue passing out of Boston; and it is noticeable that in this second volume the colors are not spread on so thick. Furthermore, he succeeds in getting free, after the first hundred pages or so, of the viscousness produced in "The Flowering" by his stirring into the stream of his story the *ipsissima verba* of his subjects. The presentations of artistic personalities become noticeably more felicitous and more fluent as he gets further along in his book. This kind of evocation he has now mastered; and the Mary L. Wilkins, the Amy Lowell, the E. A. Robinson and the Robert Frost are the best things of the kind he has done.

Indeed, he has now mastered the whole art of this biographical-historical narrative—an art which has its special difficulties unknown to the teller of invented fables. To reduce this kind of actual material to a story which will carry the reader along, to find a scale and provide a variety which will make it possible to hold his attention, become a species of obstacle race, in which the writer has made a wager to play a graceful and entertaining role while hampered by the necessity of sticking to texts, of accumulating scattered data and of organizing a complicated unity.

What precisely is Mr. Brooks's story? It is not perhaps quite a history of literature. Nor is it—since he somewhat slights philosophy and theology—quite the history of "The New England mind" which he announced in his first volume. It is rather a history of New England society as reflected in its cultural activities. If Mr. Brooks is not always alive to the values of his American subjects in the larger Western setting, he is a master, our only real master since the death of Vernon Parrington, of the social interpretation of literature inside the national frame. To read his "Indian Summer" of New England is, for

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an American old enough to have been young in the period he is writing about, a constantly fascinating and surprising revelation. You will find out in this new book of Mr. Brooks why people went abroad every spring, and why they sometimes went and never came back. See the chapter on "The Post-War Years," in which he tells how the commercial development that followed the Civil War extinguished the old enthusiasm for culture along with the republican ideal and made cultivated people in general ashamed of the United States—a chapter which provides the most satisfying analysis yet made of this situation and which is likely to remain the classical account of it. In the same chapter you will find out why the ladies in your childhood read the American Howells and James, whereas the men read the English Kipling and Conan Doyle, and why you were told that Mark Twain was "vulgar." You will find out why your aunt studied botany and why some cousin who had to go West for his health taught you to name the birds without a gun. You will find out the real significance of "The Peterkin Papers," that monstrous and matter-of-fact comic fantasy, that haunts you like a dream of childhood. You will learn who all those people really were whose writings you have never thought to look into since you have been old enough to select your own reading and who have remained to you familiar but phantasmal myths, always designated by triple names like the epithets and patronymics of Homer: Helen Hunt Jackson, Thomas Bailey Aldrich, Charles Dudley Warner, Edward Rowland Sill. You will learn how Edward Estlin Cummings of Patchin Place, New York, is connected with Ralph Waldo Emerson of Concord.

Mr. Brooks's study of New England is, in short, one of the three or four prime light-diffusing works on the history of American society—I should include also the Beards' "Rise of American Civilization" and Dos Passos' "U.S.A."—that have appeared in our own time. It is one of the key books of our period, which places us in time and space and tells us what to think of ourselves.

What Mr. Brooks used to tell us to think was depressing, though up to a point also bracing; and his reversal of feeling in "The Flowering of New England" did seem a little overwrought. But in this last volume, he has hit an equilibrium. His account of the decline of Boston is not lugubrious in his early manner: the whole tone is one of pride and confidence. His last pages on the revival of the New England ideals in the writers of the cosmopolitan period which followed 1914 are among the most eloquent he has written, and among the most impressive.

Mr. Brooks's medium and field are justified, as every writer's must be, by the fact that he can produce through them a beautiful book which has something of importance to say. His love of literature is not to be proved or disproved by his habit of evaluating authors in terms of their social implications against the immediate local background any more than the knowledge of humanity of a novelist is to be tested by his setting or his not setting his characters in relation to the rest of the world or by his neglect, in his preoccupation with his own particular scale of values, of someone else's different scale of values. It is proved by the purity of his enthusiasms and by his own splendid abilities as an artist.

EDMUND WILSON

You Can Go Home Again

Jacoby's Corners, by Jake Falstaff. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 255 pages, illustrated. $2.50.

"JACOBY'S CORNERS" is another calling card sent in by a persistent ghost. In newspaper files, under date of January 18, 1935, you will find reported the death of Herman Fetzer, best known as Jake Falstaff, at Cleveland, Ohio, on the preceding day.

References to "Jake" still crop up with great frequency in the conversations of those who knew him, and always it is as though he were around somewhere and might be putting in an appearance at any moment. In some newspaper city rooms, again, he is a legend more alive than many an executive and sub-editor still physically on the premises. In Akron, the young folk of the Copley Road district say, "See you at Jake's," when referring to the book-lending branch housed in the school he once attended, a structure officially labeled Maple Valley Library by a legal-minded board which held the suggested Falstaff name too great a departure from precedent. He appears as regularly in the magazines as when he was here in the flesh. And for all of being poems, his last preceding book, "The Bulls of Spring" (1937), outsold by three or four times the volumes he saw go to the printer.

For a newspaperman to survive in that fashion, there must be exceptional reasons. You will find some of them in "Jacoby's Corners," the chronicle of a city boy's visit with Swiss-German rural relatives in northeastern Ohio some thirty years ago. Here is the close observation of small, important things that shows in nearly all his work; the little pictures that come right out of the page, saying "You've noticed this yourself"—although no one has set them down before. Here is store of gusty anecdote and here are the lyrical interjections of the poet always looking over the journalist's shoulder:

> It is good to walk in the fat, moist ground, with the bitter, bitten crows settling down behind to taste the red worms. It is good to feel the tug of the lines on the small of the back. The strength of the earth flows up the plow-handles into the arms.

The faults of "Jacoby's Corners" are faults inevitable in a posthumous paste-up book of newspaper pieces. The long first chapter is the only one the author worked over with a view to more permanent publication. The others have been strung together right from the files, with too little cutting of the repetitious inanities of rural flip talk and too much effort to retain an unnecessary narrative thread by including the "action" episodes in which Jake was weak.

The virtues far outweigh the weaknesses, however, and it is of the principal one that we have a few more words to say. That was the ability of Jake, "patriarchal and venerable in soul" as Franklin Booth found him, to range back through time and see the things about him with boyhood's eyes. Also published this month, we are reminded, is Thomas Wolfe's posthumous "You Can't Go Home Again," which argues that there is no returning in the spirit to the old life. It was Jake Falstaff's good fortune always to be able to do just that. And it is the reader's good fortune that the posthumous "Jacoby's Corners" takes you with him.

HOWARD WOLF

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The Left Side of the Tracks

The Fat Years and the Lean, by Bruce Minton and John Stuart. New York: Modern Age Books. 461 pages. $3.75.

BRUCE MINTON AND JOHN STUART, who wrote the popular "Men Who Lead Labor," do not intend their new book to be a detailed history of the United States during the last two decades. Their task in "The Fat Years and the Lean" is to present a meaningful pattern of the processes that have given shape and direction to American life since the end of the first World War. It is unfortunate that the publishers have burdened the jacket with statements that the volume contains "much new light and some unexpected conclusions," that it "is basic social history," and that it presents "the *inside story* of our own confused and groping generation." The contents of the volume and, in part, the authors' purposes rule out its claims to these signal achievements.

As Marxists, Minton and Stuart find the key to the history of the post-War years in the economy of the United States, which, having reached the maturity of monopoly capitalism, has been in a process of decline during the past twenty years. The domestic and foreign politics of the period, the social movements and the cultural activities of the American people are all determined by this basic development. These in turn, of course, effect changes in the economy. Throughout the volume the authors, as they remark, seek to picture "the peoples' struggles against monopoly and hunger, and for a freer and more abundant life—of the conscious and unconscious drive toward socialism."

The result is an uneven and, at times, completely irritating book. Much of its history is *a priori;* it is the product of conclusions reached before the evidence was examined. The principle of historical selection is so strenuously employed that data which run counter to a particular thesis are frequently ignored. At its worst, therefore, the volume exhibits the less attractive characteristics of a propaganda pamphlet.

"Monopoly" and the monopolists are the villains of the piece. Who the latter are is not fully indicated, and the meaning of the term monopoly is shrouded in considerable mystery. It is difficult to tell whether the authors wish the word to be taken in the Leninist sense, or as it is legally defined, or, following popular American usage, as a synonym for big business. There is much talk of the consolidation of monopoly, but no adequate treatment of the process or of its consequences. Changes in the corporate structure of American business and the development of holding companies during the twenties receive scant attention. This and the inadequate treatment of the causes of the depression, technological changes, price and wage movements, profits and unemployment are serious shortcomings in a work of this nature.

As is to be expected, a good deal of the narrative depends on the concept of class. Unfortunately this valid approach is rendered somewhat pointless by the failure to make unmistakably clear how the concept of class is being employed, and failure to give a considered analysis of the class structure of American society. Objections may also be registered against the tendency to personalize such terms as "monopoly" and "capitalism"; for this results in making complex developments either obscure or meaningless. It is interesting, but not very illuminating, to find that "monopoly capitalism menaced the home," or that "Monopoly grew more frenzied."

Particularly lacking in objectivity and marked by a polemic tone, the last two chapters—"The Great Compromise" and "In the Shadow of War"—are closely geared to the present line of the Communist Party. This is immediately evident in the sections on foreign affairs—which consistently defend the policies of the Soviet Union—and in the evaluation of the New Deal and President Roosevelt. "The difference between Roosevelt's program and the methods of the discredited Hoover," say Minton and Stuart, "expressed itself largely in the greater energy and thoroughness of the New Deal."

There is much, however, on the credit side of the ledger. Some of the writing is sharp and sprightly, and there are several acute pen portraits of political figures. The first portion of the book, up to the election of 1928, is distinguished by astute and incisive political reporting, and in several instances the authors make fruitful use of earlier secondary work and periodical sources. In spite of their violent adjectival assault on the American Federation of Labor, Gompersism, and the non-Communist segments of the Marxist movement, the authors deserve credit for their constant concern with the labor and left-wing history of the period. That is an aspect of America that conventional historians almost always neglect.

HENRY DAVID

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The Seal in the Bedroom

Fables for Our Time, by James Thurber. New York: Harper and Brothers. 132 pages. $2.50.

JAMES THURBER is a very special man with any kind of animal story. The idea of course is to give your animals a human cast; but he makes all the other bestiarists look like people who just make people look like animals. There are twenty-eight fables here (you saw them all in The New Yorker or what do you do with your spare time, whittle?), and now each has its page drawing in the usual line-and-a-promise technique. To fill the book out there are casuals in between—mostly the dog, which is probably Thurber's reincarnation in a time machine, down a hill in hope or steps in doubt and duty, waiting to see if the turtle is going to pull a knife on him or corking off in the best chair.

You can go through the book in half an hour or so. The first time. One of the best, for example, is "The Little Girl and the Wolf"—it doesn't take more than five times to have it by heart, though the picture of the little girl is another matter and you probably know a family who has her. This is the one that winds up: "She had approached no nearer than twenty-five feet from the bed when she saw that it was not her grandmother but the wolf. . . . So the little girl took an automatic out of her basket and shot the wolf dead. Moral: It is not so easy to fool little girls nowadays as it used to be." Or the one about the Fairly Intelligent Fly who wasn't taken by spiders because he only settled down where there were flies in large numbers, and he flew until he found flies in large numbers indeed, and was just leveling off for a landing when a bee buzzed up and said, "Hold it, stupid, that's flypaper." The fly thought different. ("Moral: There is no safety in numbers, or anything else.") Or take the eagle who got the lion's mane: "Flying back to the rocky nest where he lived with his mate, he decided to have some fun with her. So, covered with the lion's mane, he poked his head into the nest and in a deep, awful voice said 'Harrooo!' His mate, who was very nervous anyway, grabbed a pistol from a bureau drawer and shot him dead thinking he was a lion. Moral: Never allow a nervous female to have access to a pistol, no matter what you're wearing."

Thurber gets into the most outrageous places, but you can't help following him around over the banana peels because the line of his prose is as open and clear as daylight—it is classic in one sense and in another it is perfectly alive with the best in racy speech. "A clown," said the Scotty Who Knew Too Much on being shown a skunk while visiting friends in the country; "a pushover." He was going to lick anything they had around. So after he moved in on the bum they asked him what had happened.

" 'He threw vitriol,' said the Scotty, 'but he never laid a glove on me.' " Also: "In the woods of the Far West there once lived a brown bear who could take it or leave it alone. He would go into a bar where they sold mead . . . and he would have just two drinks. Then he would put some money on the bar and say, 'See what the bears in the back room will have.' " Or: " 'Tush!' said the male crow, 'you are simply a jealous woman.' He tossed her a few dollars. 'Here,' he said, 'Go out buy yourself

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some finery. You look like the bottom of an old teakettle.' And he went off to look for the oriole." When he found this Baltimore-oriole mouse of his dreams, "he courted her in a harsh, grating voice, which made her laugh merrily. 'You sound like an old window shutter,' she said. 'I am bigger and stronger than your gentleman friend,' said the crow. . . . 'I am a fine sentinel and my voice can be heard for miles in case of danger.' 'I don't see how that could interest anybody but another crow,' said the female oriole. . . . The male oriole tossed the crow some coins. 'Here,' he said, 'go buy yourself a blazer or something. You look like the bottom of an old coffeepot.'" ("Moral: Even the llama should stick to mamma.") All right, if you're still not laughing go away from here, will you?

The last fifty pages of this book have the nine "Famous Poems Illustrated" Thurber has done, starting with "Excelsior," which is the best, going through "Curfew Must Not Ring Tonight" and "Young Lochinvar" to "Ben Bolt" and all the others which you have already seen or will you please go away I mean it. Here the thing is purely the drawing, and here you can study it. Thurber's drawing may as the legend goes have started as a cross between neurasthenia and doodling, but by now it is a full-fledged style, capable of anything and secure in its authority. Go from the super-real mist picture of "The Sands o' Dee" to the face for "Like a dog, he hunts in dreams" or the two groups in "Oh When I Was . . ." to the perfect shout of an Alice for the line "And trembled with fear at your frown"; to the action pictures in "Lochinvar" to the shrewd, complete drawing of the elephant rampant in one of the fables, to the dogs and the birds and so forth. The fables can be quoted and are, believe me; on the drawings you're stuck. You say they're good and funny and that you keep going back to them and laughing. Well, I suppose the way tastes vary that could be said of a lot of other artists. But I say Thurber is a special case. He is as unlikely and perfect as the seal in the bedroom; he is not only a Landmark in American Humor and peculiar to this time—in the combination of his prose and picture he is the funniest artist who ever lived and wrote about it too. You don't have to agree on this, but one thing: you sleep in the next room, you hear?

OTIS FERGUSON

A Reader's List

THE FLYING VISIT, by Peter Fleming (Scribner's, $1.50). The visitor is Mr. Hitler; the hosts are the British Cabinet; and the visit is a nightmare which turns out to be a silly wish dream. The whole thing is treated with healthy laughter, and neither the visitor nor his hosts are spared. The illustrations by Low are superb.

GUILTY MEN, by "Cato" (Stokes, $1.50). Fifteen character studies in appeasement, optimism, slovenly thinking and plain lying, by an angry British journalist who demands the quick removal of the remaining umbrella people from the British Cabinet.

SUEZ AND PANAMA, by André Siegfried (Harcourt, Brace, $3). A competent economist who knows how to enliven his book by well chosen episodes treats of the history, politics and finances of the two most important world arteries. Illustrated by numerous maps and graphs.

When Fever Fanned The Spark of Genius

• Why have so many famous men and women of art and literature been afflicted with tuberculosis? Could there be some chemical affinity between fever and genius? Or did the enforced solitude, the wandering from place to place in search of relief, the frantic writing against death's deadline cause the flame to glow so brightly? A practicing physician now reveals from this intriguing viewpoint the lives of Stevenson, Schiller, Marie Bashkirtseff, Katherine Mansfield, Voltaire, Moliere, Francis Thompson, Shelley, Keats, and St. Francis of Assisi, with liberal quotations from each one's correspondence, diaries, and books. 10 illustrations.

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BEHIND THE SCENES OF MURDER, by Joseph Catton (Norton, $3). Dr. Catton is a pretty well known court psychiatrist as well as a professor at Stanford. He has been called in on some of the most sensational cases and his book is partly reminiscence and partly a statement for the importance of impartial psychoanalysis in determining guilt and responsibility. Definitions; clinical notes. Quite sane.

THE AGADIR CRISIS, by Ima Christina Barlow (North Carolina, $4). A scholarly account of the famous 1911 Moroccan crisis, one of the stormiest preludes to the First World War; probably the first intensive study of the subject in any language. The emphasis is on Franco-German rivalry.

MY VANISHED AFRICA, by Peter W. Rainier (Yale, $2.75). Born and educated among the Zulus, a crack shot and horseman who later became a prospector and mining executive, the author knows many phases of African life and writes about them with clarity and vividness. This is one of the best books on Africa since Sir Harry Johnston. Fine maps and a glossary of Zulu and South African Dutch terms.

IF YOU DRINK, by Wilfred Funk (Funk, $2). Another popularization of what alcohol does to you socially and physically, with personal digressions and nudges, various sets of test questions, and the results of a questionnaire sent out to random literary people. As reading: near-beer.

Fiction

THE DEVIL AND THE DOCTOR, by David H. Keller (Simon and Schuster, $2.50). What happens when the Devil moves in on a God-fearing town in Pennsylvania. His pal, the philosophical country doctor, finds him slightly peculiar but good company and a handy fellow to have around. Pleasantly whimsical stuff, proving that if you give the Devil his due, it pays.

THE YELLOW ANGELS, by Henry Edward Helseth (Harpers, $2). Third-grade prisoners in the reformatory—those who keep colliding with regulations—are the yellow angels. They're a pretty thick-skinned lot, but blame it all, your author advises, on an intolerably brutal prison routine. Plenty of violence and ugliness here, moving at a good clip.

THE CABALLERO, by Harold Courlander (Farrar and Rinehart, $2.50). An island very much like Haiti is reconstructed as background for this elaborate story of conquest in the New World, including those of the Marines and of the ex-brigand dictator who is the principal figure. A very good idea of the mixed forces and bloods in this part of the world; a faltering grip on character and straight-out narrative; 443 pages.

RALEIGH'S EDEN, by Inglis Fletcher (Bobbs-Merrill, $2.75). A job of research and a job of fiction, worked together to tell the story behind the American Revolution. Long and overcrowded, the book contains more thunder than lightning. The "downtrodden" are described with more sympathy than understanding; and the aristocrats are merely embarrassing.

Contributors

Donald W. Mitchell has a Ph.D. in recent United States history and is a specialist in American foreign policy and naval affairs. In the last few months he has had articles in The Nation, The Yale Review and Our Navy.

A. I. Harris was recently the editor and manager of The Minnesota Leader, published weekly by the Farmer-Labor Association of Minnesota.

David W. Nussbaum was graduated from Harvard last year, where he was editor of The Advocate. He has since done newspaper work in Kansas and is now in Mexico.

Edward Newhouse is the author of two novels, "You Can't Sleep Here" and "This Is Your Day." He is at work on a book of short stories, some of which are currently appearing in The New Yorker.

Tom Boggs is the author of several books, including "Lyrics in Brief" and "51 Neglected Lyrics." His work has appeared in various magazines.

Russell W. Davenport resigned as managing editor of Fortune to direct the presidential campaign of W-nd-ll W-llk—.

Edmund Wilson's latest book, "To the Finland Station," is a study of the modern conception of history. It is to be published September 27 by Harcourt, Brace.

Howard Wolf writes a newspaper column, The Band-Stand, and is completing a history of the news services under his second Guggenheim Fellowship.

Henry David teaches history at Queens College, and is the author and co-author of a number of books on labor history. He is now at work on a history of the United States in the twentieth century.

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